THE RED MIRIOK

AND

SHAN FOLK LORE STORIES

THE RED MIRIOK

BY

ANNA M. BARNES

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

GEORGE A. NEWMAN

SHAN FOLK LORE STORIES

BY

W. C. GRIGGS, M. D.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A NATIVE ARTIST

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY LIBRARY

PHILADELPHIA

American Baptist Publication Society

1420 Chestnut Street

M 810871

244
B26

Copyright 1901 and 1902 by the
AMERICAN BAPTIST PUBLICATION SOCIETY

Published January, 1903

BROOKLYN
PUBLIC LIBRARY

From the Society's own Press

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

KOREA has been called the "Hermit Nation," as of all nations Tibet alone has exceeded it in repulsing foreign influences. Only in 1882 did the United States secure a treaty, and that opened the country to foreign trade only in the capital, Seoul, and three ports. But in this treaty Korea was treated with as an independent State, and its people are distinct from either Chinese or Japanese and well repay study and missionary labors. This little story is one of the first to present this slightly known land and its customs, and therefore deserves special attention from all who are interested in the Christianizing of Oriental nations.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

Mr. Kit-ze 9

CHAPTER II

A Hasty Desertion 19

CHAPTER III

The Lost Recovered 30

CHAPTER IV

A Stowaway 39

CHAPTER V

Before the Magistrate 49

CHAPTER VI

A Friendly Hail 61

CHAPTER VII

An Entreaty 71

CHAPTER VIII

The Story of Choi-so 81

CHAPTER IX

A Theft 90

CHAPTER X

An Arrested Sacrifice 102

CHAPTER XI

"One Soul" 115

ILLUSTRATIONS

Mr. Kit-ze's hat was moving across the organ" 17

'*Yes, only a little, for it takes nearly three thousand of them to make a dollar*'" 28

'*Yes, it was the red miriok*" 38

'*He began to shake him vigorously*" 47

'*Cheefoo prostrated himself to the magistrate*" 54

'*The old man was bolt upright, despite his years*" . . . 69

'*Then, extending his hands, entreated*" 79

'*He was permitted to look . . . upon the priests at their devotions*" 85

'*He forthwith . . . proceeded to throw rice into the well*" 92

''*Stop!*' *entreated Helen*" 106

''*Sorry. Sorry. It was wrong. She showed me*'" . . 123

THE RED MIRIOK

CHAPTER I

MR. KIT-ZE

"THERE is one thing I forgot to mention," said Mr. Reid, resuming the conversation. "If we do undertake our sampan journey, we must have Mr. Kit-ze. I have already talked to him about it."

"Oh, father!"

The expression of Clarence's face so emphasized his protest that nothing beyond the mere exclamation was necessary.

"Why, Clarence, what could be the objection to Mr. Kit-ze?"

"A good one, father. He is such an eel-like fellow. I know we couldn't depend on him. Then it strikes me that his mind isn't right. He's always muttering

to himself and clutching his breast in such a queer way. Oh, I'm sure it would be a bad step to take Mr. Kit-ze."

"That is just like a boy!" declared Helen, his sister, "jumping at conclusions."

"You mean girls," retorted Clarence. "They fairly spring at them; yes, reach out their arms to grasp 'em as they spring."

"Come, children, don't spar," warned Mr. Reid. "But, my son," turning to Clarence, "I fear it is as your sister asserts, you have arrived at conclusions too hastily with reference to Mr. Kit-ze. He is a little strange in his manner, I'll admit; but his friends, some of whom belong to the mission, tell me that he is a very good sort of fellow, honest and well-meaning, though he is rather grasping as to money matters."

"He is well-meaning," asserted Helen; "and I think the reason he is so close about money is because he has many who are dependent on him. Yes, I like Mr. Kit-ze. Though some of his ways are strange, yet he is good-natured and kind when you know him well."

"Guess, then, I don't know him well," admitted Clarence.

"No; and until you do, you won't like him."

Clarence whistled, and reached over to give the tail of Nam-san, the monkey, a twist, which that quick-tempered little animal resented by scratching at him and then springing away.

"I think I know what is the matter with Mr.

Kit-ze," said Mr. Reid, as though in sudden comment ter following a line of thought. "He is a religious nthusiast."

Helen looked at him quickly, a glad light over- preading her face. "Oh, father, I didn't know that Mr. Kit-ze had been converted. That *is* news."

"I don't mean that, Helen. I wish that it were rue, for I have been working earnestly to that end for nore than a year. What I have reference to is that e is an enthusiast in his own religious belief."

"Why, I didn't know, uncle, that these people had ny religious belief," said his nephew, Mallard Hale, who for a few moments past had not joined in the con- ersation. "I believe, yes, I am sure I have seen it tated that as a country Korea is practically without a eligion."

"That is true in one sense, Mallard, but not in an- ther. While Korea has no established religion, what night be called a national religion, as have China, Japan, and her other neighbors, yet such of the Koreans as have not individually embraced Buddhism, Confucianism, and the like, are given over wholly to ncestral and to demon worship, especially the lat- er."

"What do you mean by demon worship, uncle?"

"They believe in spirits of all degrees, good, bad, nd indifferent, but principally the bad. They fill the ir around them; they dwell in their homes; they sit t their feasts; they even perch upon such portions of he human body as suits them. They bring evil or good

as they are angered or appeased. To counteract the influence of the evil demons the people carry about with them certain charms to frighten them away. Around their habitations, especially in the country districts, they erect these grotesque figures having resemblance to the human form, the more hideous the better. They are called *mirioks.* In the cities, where there is little space for such erection, the figures, considerably diminished in size, are either kept in the homes or carried about the person. In many instances this devotion to *mirioks* amounts to fanaticism of the most pronounced kind."

"Oh, yes, that is just what Mr. Kit-ze does!" exclaimed Joyce, the younger son of the family. "He carries it around in his bosom. Sometimes he takes it out and talks to it. I have seen it. Oh! it is the ugliest little red thing!"

All eyes were now turned inquiringly upon him. "I believe, yes, I am sure," he continued, "if I were to see it in the black dark, I'd run from it."

"Why, how could you see it in 'the black dark'?" quizzed Mallard.

Joyce flushed as the laugh went around at his expense, then he answered: "Oh, I mean if it were so I could see it even a little bit. I am sure I could see its eyes, for they are made out of something that just glitters and burns."

"It is as I supposed," said Mr. Reid; "Mr. Kit-ze is an enthusiast on the subject of this *miriok.* This accounts for his strange behavior, his mutterings, and the

utchings at his breast. He keeps the *miriok* there in he folds of his gown. He believes that it wards away he evil spirits and invites the good. On other subjects am sure he is all right. At any rate, if we are going attempt that journey up the Han we shall be almost ependent on him. He not only has the largest sampan nd is considered the safest boatman on the river, but e also knows the way better, having ascended higher han any other, I am told."

"Then, uncle, we must have him by all means," aid Mallard decisively.

"Yes," added Clarence somewhat flippantly, "red *iriok* and all."

"Yes, even the red *miriok* to get Mr. Kit-ze," declared Mallard. Then he asked, "Isn't the journey ttended by some degree of danger?"

"With considerable danger at some places, I understand, Mallard; and this is why we should have a stout ampan as well as a sampan man who understands both is business and the river."

The family of Rev. Mr. Reid, missionary at Seoul, Korea, consisted of his wife, her widowed sister, his wo sons, Clarence and Joyce, and his daughter, Helen. Mallard Hale, an American youth of seventeen, had ecently come to make his home with his uncle. He as only a few months older than Clarence, and the wo cousins were very fond of each other. Helen was early fifteen and Joyce twelve.

For some days they had been talking of this sampan ourney up the Han. Mr. Reid had long wanted to

take such a trip into the interior for the purpose of making observations of the country and of studying the conditions of the people along the south branch of the Han. It was reported to be a wonderfully attractive and fertile section, with a people whose manners and customs, differing from those in the cities, made them of deep interest to the traveler. They were described as quiet and peaceful, given to hospitality, and fairly burning with curiosity.

The Mission Board, under the auspices of which Mr. Reid labored, had for some time contemplated the establishment of a branch mission in the interior. They were waiting for him to decide the point where it should be located. He had hesitated a long time about undertaking the sampan journey because as yet there had not been sufficient money to defray the necessary expenses. But the coming of his nephew, Mallard Hale, had quickly done away with this obstacle. For Mallard was comfortably fixed as to income, and he insisted on bearing all the expense of hiring and propelling the sampan, while his uncle was left to provide only for provisions and equipments.

"Then, uncle," said Mallard, after they had talked a little further, "let us decide positively on going, also that we take Mr. Kit-ze and his sampan."

"Yes, red——" began Clarence, but the words were cut short by an exclamation from Joyce.

"Why," he cried, "here is Mr. Kit-ze now!"

Sure enough, Mr. Kit-ze was coming in. It was just after dinner, or *opan*, as they would say in Korea,

and Mr. Kit-ze was still caressing his lips with his tongue, well pleased with the toothsome morsels that had gone to comfort his stomach. He was a little stouter and taller than the average man of his race, standing five feet six in his sandals, weighing, perhaps, one hundred and sixty pounds, and was fifty years of age. His complexion, originally of a bright olive, had now a deep tan through the action of sun and winds. He had a straight nose, but rather distended nostrils, the oblique Mongolian eye, while his hair, of a deep russet-brown smeared with lampblack, was wound in a knot at the top of his head.

Mr. Kit-ze had on the loose white robe of his countrymen, with flowing sleeves, that fell just below the knees. It was belted in with a girdle of straw. Beneath it showed his baggy trousers, gathered in at the ankle. A *katsi* (hat), in shape like a flower pot turned down over a table, wadded stockings, and sandals of straw completed his attire. When he removed his hat, on Mr. Reid's invitation, there was a little tight-fitting skullcap of horsehair underneath, carefully placed on top of his knot of hair. He seemed solicitous about his hat, not knowing just where to place it. It was, indeed, a huge affair for a hat, the brim being nearly six feet in circumference. At home Mr. Kit-ze had his swinging case for his hat, but here he was at a loss as to its disposal. Helen at length came to the rescue and placed it on top of the organ, where it rested, one portion of the brim lying upon a large music book, the other flat upon the surface of the instrument.

"Well, Mr. Kit-ze," said Mr. Reid, "are you ready to take another journey with your sampan up the South Han?"

Instead of replying to this question, Mr. Kit-ze suggested: "Better go up the North Han, honorable instructor. There are the Diamond Mountains."

Clarence jumped up suddenly, shouting out his delight: "Yes, father, let's go to the Diamond Mountains. Oh, won't that be glorious?"

"And pick up treasure," suggested Helen; "enough to build the new mission chapel that is so needed," she added, her eyes taking on a deeper glow as she glanced at her father.

"Why, are there really any treasures to be found in those mountains?" asked Mallard, catching the excitement.

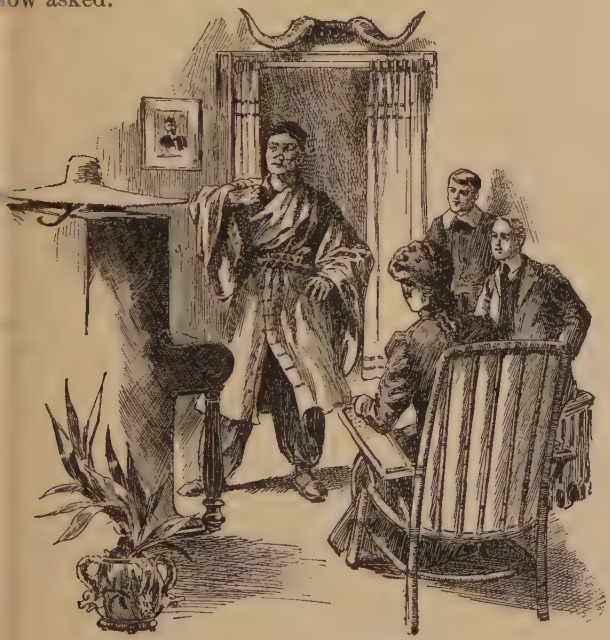
Mr. Kit-ze, who understood enough of the language to catch the drift of the question, quickly replied: "Yes, honorable sir, there are treasures. Two gentlemen from your country got a whole wallet full of diamonds in the mountains last week. They say they can be picked up like bamboo reeds after a freshet."

"Only Mr. Kit-ze's enthusiasm," said Mr. Reid in an aside to his nephew. "Some one has been filling him with the story, which is vastly exaggerated, I am sure. But later in the year, Mallard, if you desire it, we can make the trip to the Diamond Mountains. Now my Master's business calls me in another direction."

"All right, uncle, that Diamond Mountain trip can

ait. Yes, we'll take it later," he added after a ause.

"Is your sampan ready, Mr. Kit-ze?" Mr. Reid ow asked.



"MR. KIT–ZE'S HAT WAS MOVING ACROSS THE ORGAN!"

"Not quite, exalted master; but your servant can make it ready in a day or so."

"Are you sure of that? We should like to start by Tuesday of next week; and when we are ready we want the sampan ready. You understand?"

"Most learned teacher, it shall be as you wish," Mr. Kit-ze assured him, with a bow that brought his forehead almost to the floor.

A full understanding was now had; the day set, arrangements perfected, and the amount of Mr. Kit-ze's remuneration satisfactorily adjusted.

Mr. Kit-ze arose to go. All this time, having declined the chair offered to him, he had been squatting upon his heels, his legs doubled back under him. Considering the position, it was surprising how quickly he got up. He had barely gained his feet when a sudden cry that startled them all escaped him. He was gazing straight toward the organ, his features growing rigid, his eyes dilating. Following his gaze, it took them only an instant to discover what was the matter—Mr. Kit-ze's hat was moving across the organ, moving as though it had feet and were walking.

CHAPTER II

A HASTY DESERTION

THE pupils of Mr. Kit-ze's eyes grew larger and larger. They seemed ready to burst into flame. He began to mutter: "The spirit! the spirit! It has attached itself to my hat! It will now attend me home and stay there; how long, I do not know." He made a sudden movement toward the door. He was evidently going away without his hat. Nothing could induce him to touch it while the spirit had taken hold of it in so demonstrative a way. Plainly his thought was that it was better to lose the hat than to run the risk of contact with the spirit.

His movement was hasty, but, quick as he was, Helen acted more quickly. In an instant of time, as it were, she had grasped the whole situation. Her eyes too had done her good service. Her glance

in the direction of the moving hat had shown her what Mr. Kit-ze did not see, nor even the others at first, an inch or so of snake-like tail showing beneath the rim of the hat. She sprang toward the organ, quickly threw up the hat, and exposed to view the whole furry body of Nam-san, the monkey, who began to chatter at her indignantly, the shrill notes heard above the burst of laughter that now came from the others.

Mr. Kit-ze was just backing out of the doorway, but he paused as Helen's quick movement disclosed Nam-san under the hat.

"You see it is the monkey, Mr. Kit-ze," said Helen smiling. "He is a mischievous little beast, and doesn't respect anything that he can have his fun with; not even your hat, Mr. Kit-ze. But he hasn't hurt it. See, it is all right!"

She advanced toward Mr. Kit-ze bearing the hat. She held it toward him, but he did not take it. He still seemed alarmed, and his glance was nervous.

Seeing the condition Mr. Kit-ze was still in and his attitude toward the hat, Mr. Reid now came to Helen's assistance. "There has no harm befallen the hat," he assured Mr. Kit-ze. "It was only the little beast under it, as you saw, that was causing it to move. It is all right now, my friend," and he took the hat from Helen and held it toward Mr. Kit-ze.

Mr. Kit-ze still hesitated, but, after further reassuring words from Mr. Reid, he consented to receive the hat. Yet he did not put it on; he turned away, hold-

g it gingerly between his thumb and one finger. Af-
r he had gone, they found it on the doorstep, a mark
pparently made with red chalk drawn all around the
m.

"The superstitious old crank!" exclaimed Clarence
disgust; "what made him leave his hat with us?
hy didn't he take it away and destroy it, if he was
at afraid of it?"

"I think he left it as a reproach to us," said Mr.
eid. The eyes around him sought his inquiringly.

"It is a hint that, as the misfortune befell it here,
nd he is now deprived of his hat, we should replace
with another."

"And how will Mr. Kit-ze feel toward us, uncle, if
e do not?" asked Mallard.

"I fear not very pleasantly, for a while, at least,"
eplied Mr. Reid.

"Then the new hat must go to him by all means,"
aid Mallard. "We can't afford to start off with our
ampan man in the pouts."

"No, indeed," assented Helen.

So the next day they sent Mr. Kit-ze a new hat, with
xpressions of regret at what had happened, and with
he assurance that the other hat had been destroyed.

"For that is what he expects of us," Mr. Reid had
aid. "He drew the red chalk mark so as to confine
he spirit within the hat, then left the hat for us to de-
troy, together with the spirit. All pure foolishness,"
e concluded, a little emphatically. "We'll just
hrow the hat aside."

"No, father," said Helen decisively, "we will burn it."

"And thus encourage Mr. Kit-ze in his silliness?" asked Clarence.

"In his superstition," corrected Mr. Reid.

"But it is all so real to him, poor man!" said Helen. And she continued, her eyes softening: "If it will make him feel better to know it is destroyed, isn't it worth while?"

"Yes," assented Mallard heartily, "it is. We'll burn the hat, my Helen. I'm sure uncle won't object."

"Oh, no," assented Mr. Reid. "If Helen wants to take the trouble, let her do it."

A day or two later Mr. Kit-ze came again. He had on his new hat, and was in the best of humor. Especially did his face express pleasure when Helen, carrying him to a spot in the yard, showed him the small pile of ashes to which the hat had been reduced. He stooped hurriedly, gathered them up, and, holding them in his palms, blew his breath hard upon the mass, scattering it to the four winds. Then he grunted with satisfaction, and, going down on hands and knees, made Helen a series of the most profound bows.

He had come to tell them that the sampan was ready, but on account of the great danger of the shoals near Seoul, they must make their arrangements to start from Han-Kang, four miles from the city. Themselves and their supplies could be transported thither by pony-back. Mr. Kit-ze further informed them that he had

·ured, as both interpreter and assistant boatman, one r. Cheefoo, a graduate of the government schools. e had recently fallen upon hard ways, and was glad ough to earn a little for himself, as well as to see ne of the world, even if it were only his own country. r. Cheefoo would be sent to assist them with the load- g, and to guide them to Han-Kang, where Mr. Kit-ze d the sampan would be found awaiting them.

Mr. Chefoo came a day ahead of the time set for arting, for the supplies must be carefully packed into les ere they could be loaded. He had too, some sug- stions from Mr. Kit-ze as to what to take and how to ke it. The selection of the necessary provisions and her supplies had cost them much thought and plan- ing. They knew they must not overload the sampan, s much as they might want to take some things. On ie other hand was the danger of starting out with a o meagre supply. They finally decided on the fol- wing: seventy-five pounds of flour, thirty pounds of ce,—they expected to buy more of this on the way,— half-bushel of beans, a strip or two of dried beef, a nall amount of meats in cans and of tomatoes for ups.

"We can get eggs and vegetables from the country eople," said Mr. Reid, who had traveled some in the nterior districts, "and there will be fish in the river to e caught."

The other supplies consisted of a brazier for charcoal, frying pan, saucepan, and kettle, some drinking mugs f stoneware, plates and soup plates of tin, knives,

forks, and spoons, the latter of wood. Mallard had his camera, and Clarence the fine Winchester which his cousin had presented to him. In addition, each traveler carried a rubber coat, a pair of blankets, and two changes of underclothing. One thing they came near forgetting, but Mrs. Reid's forethought caused them to include it among the stores almost at the last minute. This was a little case of medicines.

It was an excited and happy party that rode away from the mission house early on the following Tuesday morning. In addition to Mr. Reid, Mallard, Helen, Clarence, and Joyce, there were Mr. Wilburn, a young missionary from another station, and his sister, Dorothy, a very dear friend of Helen. Indeed, for two years past the girls had been almost inseparable. Mr. Reid's native assistant in the mission work and his wife were to be the companions of Mrs. Reid and her sister during the two weeks the party expected to be away.

They moved through the narrow streets, so narrow that it was necessary to go in single file. Even that was difficult at times, for, though the hour was early, a mass of people was beginning to stir abroad. Along each side of some of the streets ran a gutter, green with slime and thick with all manner of putrid matter. The low mud huts, with their queer, horse-shoe shaped straw roofs, were set so close to this it seemed that any one coming out of the door must fall into the slime if he were not careful. All along the streets dogs and children were tumbling about, sometimes rolling the one over the other. Even the close observer would

ave found it hard to decide which was the dirtier, dog r child.

"Oh, my, the dirty youngsters!" exclaimed Mallard, s he picked his pony's way gingerly along, sometimes nding it quite difficult to keep from riding right upon squirming little mass of humanity. "Where are the nothers," he continued, "to let them run so into dan-er?"

"You will soon find out, Mallard," replied his uncle, that the Korean woman has her hands too full of the najor duties of washing and ironing to attend with any legree of success to the minor one of looking after her hildren. There! do you not hear that strange rat-ta-at noise? That is made by the wooden club coming lown upon the garment wrapped about its iron cylinder. Wherever you go over Seoul, at almost any hour, day r night, you can hear that familiar sound. It denotes he Korean slave-wife's battle with the white clothes of ier lord and master, which must receive a certain mount of gloss, or there will be a storm in the do-nestic sky."

As they came out through the massive stone arches f the great South Gate, its lofty drum chamber with iled roof overhead, a new world seemed to burst upon hem. They could see plainly now the line of moun-ains and the nearer circlet of hills, the latter flower-rowned and sparkling like jewels in the golden light f the sun. Brilliant, indeed, was the coloring where he rich clusters of azaleas grew, and the tangled nasses of clematis and honeysuckles. Butterflies and

dragon-flies flitted through the air; numerous ducks and geese hovered along the edge of the river, now alighting and skimming the water for a few moments, then dipping wing to fly away. Flocks of cranes waded in and out of the shallow places, hunting for small fish to seize. All around was the beauty and the glory of the spring,—matchless skies, bursting flowers, and singing birds,—such a spring as makes Seoul and its surroundings a joy to eye and heart, never to be surpassed, always to be remembered.

They took the path along the river, and in a little more than an hour's time had reached Han-Kang, where they found Mr. Kit-ze and the sampan, both in fine trim and ready to be off. Mr. Kit-ze had changed his white clothing for his boatman's suit, which consisted of a blouse and Turkish trousers of coarse blue cotton cloth. He was very proud of his sampan, and insisted on showing them its various fine points as well as dwelling upon them.

"Never has such a craft gone up the waters," he declared; and indeed it did look workmanlike alongside of those usually seen on Korean streams. To begin, it had two very essential qualities—it was strongly made and it was well calked throughout. From fore to aft it measured thirty-six feet, was seven in width at its widest portion, and drew six to seven inches of water.

At Mr. Reid's request, Mr. Kit-ze had rigged up a new and a more substantial roof along the ridgepole and its supporting framework. This was composed of thick, water-tight mats of tough grass. There were

so curtains of the same material that could be fas-
ned along the sides in case of rain or when the glare
' the sun was too strong. This roof was only about
ve feet from the floor of the sampan, so that it was
ery plain to all eyes that most of its occupants would
ave to content themselves with sitting or with standing
a stooping posture. The boat had five compart-
ents, three of them from seven to eight feet long, and
ie other two only small affairs indeed. One of the
tter was in the bow of the boat and the other at the
ern. Here the boatmen stood to pole the boat during
ie day, and in them they curled down to sleep at
ight, each rolled in a straw mat and with the side of
ie boat as a pillow.

"All hands to the stores!" announced Mr. Reid.
The more quickly we have them in and are off the
etter. The sun will be pretty warm after a while."

Mr. Chefoo had brought along a young man to carry
ie ponies back, and he too was anxious to begin his
eturn journey. So all hands set to with a will, even
Ielen and Dorothy assisting "like good fellows," as
larence expressed it.

Mr. Kit-ze, following Mr. Reid's instructions, had
reviously carried aboard the sampan a supply of char-
oal and some bundles of faggots. It was only the
ores brought by the ponies that now had to be
oaded.

One thing amused Mallard greatly. This was the
iape in which most of their money to be spent on the
ay had to be brought, strung on cords of straw. And

the amount had proved almost a full burden for one pony, though in all it was only about twenty dollars. What queer looking coins they were! of copper, with a small square hole through their center.

"'YES, ONLY A LITTLE, FOR IT TAKES NEARLY THREE THOUSAND OF THEM TO MAKE A DOLLAR.'"

"This is our often abused but ever available 'cash,'" said Mr. Reid, holding up one of the crude bits of metal for Mallard to see. "As there are no bankers or money changers on the way, we must take it with

, for it is the only coin accepted in the rural dis-
icts. We must have a little ready money with us,"
e added.

"Oh, uncle, you call that *a little?*" and Mallard
ointed to the pony with his burden of coin.

"Yes, only a little, for it takes nearly three thou-
nd of them to make a dollar."

Mallard recalled his uncle's words now, as he was
elping to store the coin away in what Helen and Doro-
y had termed the sitting room of the sampan.

He had turned to address a merry remark to Helen
hen he was struck by the appearance of Mr. Kit-ze.
he boatman had stopped in the midst of something he
as doing as suddenly as though he had felt the force
f an electric shock. He had thrown his head up and
as now clutching nervously at the folds of his blouse.
lmost at the moment that Mallard's eyes were di-
ected upon him he uttered a sharp little cry. It was
f sufficient compass to reach the ears of the others.
s their eyes too were turned upon him, what was the
stonishment of all to see Mr. Kit-ze the next moment
ush up the bank to where one of the ponies, with
mpty saddle, was standing, and flinging himself upon
t, go galloping away like one suddenly out of his
enses.

CHAPTER III

THE LOST RECOVERED

EXCLAMATIONS of astonishment and of dismay followed Mr. Kit-ze. "What can he mean?" asked Mr. Reid, his eyes fixed in wonder upon the fast-retreating form of his boatman. "He surely hasn't deserted us!"

"It evidently looks that way," replied Mr. Wilburn.

"Now we are in a box!" exclaimed Clarence. "How are we to go on without our sampan man?"

"Well, we have the sampan," remarked Mallard cheerfully. "The only other thing now is to look out for some one to take charge of it."

"Easier said than accomplished," commented Mr. Reid. "Besides, though Mr. Kit-ze has deserted us, yet the sampan is his. We can't take possession without his consent."

"He has forfeited his right to protest against such a

step," declared Mr. Wilburn, "by his desertion and breach of contract. I am for taking possession of the sampan, engaging some one to have charge of it, assisted by Mr. Chefoo here, then allowing Mr. Kit-ze so much for its use."

"But a competent sampan man is hard to find," said Mr. Reid. "That was why I stuck to Mr. Kit-ze."

"Oh, but it is too bad to lose our trip!" exclaimed Mr. Wilburn, "especially when so much relating to our work depends on it," and he looked wistfully at Mr. Reid.

"Yes, too bad," assented Mallard.

"Oh, we must go," declared Clarence.

Even Helen and Dorothy were for going on, that is, if satisfactory arrangements could be made.

"But maybe Mr. Kit-ze will return," suggested Helen.

"Yes," said Mr. Chefoo, who now spoke for the first time, "he will return." All turned to look at him inquiringly. He had spoken very positively.

"What makes you say that?"

"Because, honorable sirs, he went away as one who will come back. There was no parting word. He will return."

"He didn't have sense for any parting word," commented Clarence. "It seemed all taken from him."

"No," asserted Mr. Chefoo, "it was only the excitement that comes when one knows there has been a loss."

"'A loss'!" echoed Clarence.

"Yes; Mr. Kit-ze has either lost something of very great value, for which he has now gone to make search, or else he has forgotten something that he has gone to bring. It is one or the other as you will in time discover, son of the honorable teacher."

"But why act in that demented way? Couldn't he have explained to us, and then gone after it in a respectable fashion?"

"It was something by which he set so great a store, youthful sir, that he was overcome by what its loss signified to him. I should say," continued Mr. Chefoo, "that it is something without which he could not proceed, or without which he——"

Here Mr. Chefoo paused.

"Well?" asked Clarence.

"Without which he would fear to go on."

"I see!" exclaimed Mr. Reid. "It was——"

"Let me finish, father," cried Clarence. "It was the red *miriok*. That old crank has either left it or lost it. Now we must be tied up here waiting his pleasure."

"Yes," said Mr. Reid in a disgusted manner, "it was the red *miriok* that carried him off in that demented way; I am sure of it. But don't call him a crank so boldly, Clarence. It would offend him should he hear it."

"Well, what else is he? It is just too bad to be deserted in this way and for such silliness. Oh, I wish that the red *miriok* was in the bottom of the river."

"Then, we'd never get Mr. Kit-ze to proceed," assured Mr. Wilburn, who by this time had heard the story of the red *miriok;* "or at least not until its counterpart was procured. But we can't stay here," he continued. "We must, at least, try getting on to the next village. There Mr. Kit-ze can join us. We'll leave word for him. This is a very objectionable locality for more reasons than one, and the sooner we move away from it the better."

In the meanwhile a large crowd had gathered, both on the river bank and in the shallow water surrounding the sampan. All were agape with curiosity. It is a well-known saying in Korea, and one the truth of which travelers have often proved, that if you move on, very little comment is excited; but if you stand still and appear to be engaged in anything, or even to be looking at an object, curiosity of the most intense kind is aroused. It takes but a minute or two then for the crowd to gather around you, each individual member thereof following anxiously the glance of your eye and hanging with almost breathless intent upon every movement of hand or leg.

There were women and children in the crowd as well as men. The former were so overcome by their curiosity that they had for the time forgotten to keep their long, green coats close up about their eyes, which is the custom when women are abroad in Korea. They now hung loosely about their necks, the long, wide sleeves that are rarely used swinging over their shoulders.

An old woman with much vigor of speech offered

them barley sugar for sale. She was very dirty, and her wares looked as uninviting as herself. But feeling sorry for her, Helen invested quite liberally in the barley sugar, immediately bestowing it upon a little group of open-mouthed children who stood near. In some way the old woman had caught a part, at least, of the situation. She seemed to comprehend that they were at a loss whether to go on or to stay. In return for Helen's graciousness she came to the rescue by suggesting that they send for a *mutang* (sorceress) who lived near. She would come with her drum and cymbals, her wand and divination box,[1] and in a little while she could tell them what to do.

The sun was now climbing nearer and nearer the meridian, and its rays were growing unpleasantly warm. More than an hour had been wasted since the loading of the sampan. They had burned the bridge behind them, as the saying is, by sending the man back to the city with the ponies. There was nothing now but to go on, even if they had to turn back in the midst of the journey.

Mr. Chefoo was the good fairy that came to the rescue. He seemed to regret Mr. Kit-ze's behavior keenly, and to be deeply sympathetic with the sampan party in its desire so plainly expressed to be off on the journey. He was a big, good-natured fellow, strong and hearty looking, with a clear eye and with much

[1] A box in which are carried three or more coins with characters stamped upon them. The coins are cast upward three times, falling again into the box. The combination of characters each time gives the *mutang* her clue to the divination or prediction.

intelligence expressed upon his face. He had too, a pretty fair scope of English, which made his attendance all the more satisfactory and agreeable.

Mr. Kit-ze, he continued to assure them, would return. He felt certain of it. They would leave word for him and proceed to the next town, since this one was so objectionable with its foul smells and its rather rough-looking population. The first step then, was to hire a man to help him pole, as he felt certain he, Mr. Chefoo, could direct the movements of the sampan up to the next village. There were no rapids of any considerable danger in the way.

"All right, Mr. Chefoo," said Mr. Reid. "Go ahead and hire your man, but be sure he is one on whom we can rely."

"I'll have a care to that, honorable teacher," assured Mr. Chefoo.

The first man approached declared that he couldn't go, as his wife needed him to sit and watch her while she washed the clothes. The second one said he must first ask his mother and, as she lived two villages away, they must wait until the following morning ere he could give them his answer. The third wished to know if he would be permitted to take as many as seven suits of clothes with him, as he could do with no less; also if provision would be made for their washing and ironing along the way. On being assured that no such concession could be granted he went away much aggrieved.

Another said he would gladly attend them as their

poleman if they would promise not to tie up anywhere along the bank where there were tigers, or even where tigers were known to have been on the surrounding hills. As they could give no such promise with the prospect of fulfilling it, he too had to be dismissed without an engagement. He then tried to drive a sale with them of two tiger bones at three hundred "cash" each, warranted to give strength and courage. As they hadn't the faith he had in the efficacy of the commodity, the purchase was declined. Another hour and more slipped by in this way.

Things were growing lively, if they were somewhat monotonous, for a great crowd was now surging about Mr. Chefoo, Mr. Reid, and Mr. Wilburn. The boatman had them with him for the purpose of consultation. To add to the hubbub a string of oxen and their drivers on their way to the city, the backs of the oxen piled with mountains of brushwood, had drawn near the men, the drivers overcome by curiosity at the sight of the crowd. Between their yells and shouts to the oxen and their noisy salutations passed to those they knew, there was a babel indeed.

In the very midst of these sounds came a sudden cry, sufficiently loud and prolonged to attract the attention of many. While the bargaining with the would-be polemen went on, the young people had gathered within the sitting room of the sampan, that is, all with the exception of Clarence. He had stretched himself along the stern of the boat. His head was lying on his hand upheld by the elbow.

Thus it was considerably elevated, and thus he had a fair view of the water all around the sampan.

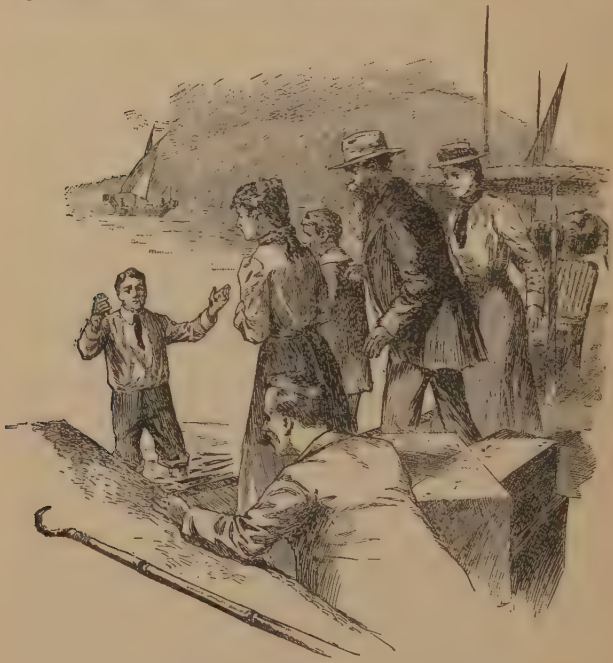
The Han is often called the River of Golden Sands. It is a clear, bright stream, its bed covered with thick layers of white sand. Along this sand particles of golden-hued gravel sparkle in the sunlight as though they were the pure metal itself. In many places, even of considerable depth, the bottom of the river is plainly seen. Where the sampan lay there was only the depth of about two feet of water. This had for a time been stirred into some degree of murkiness by the feet of those who pressed curiously about the sampan. But as the crowd had now withdrawn to the bank, where Mr. Chefoo bargained with the polemen, the river had cleared.

As Clarence lay along the stern of the boat glancing down into the water, his attention was suddenly attracted by something that rested at the top of a little hillock of sand. First its shape, then its color arrested his gaze. The next moment there came that wild shout from him, a compromise between a station-master's train call and an Indian warwhoop. Then those whose attention was now riveted upon him saw him hastily throw off his coat, his shoes and stockings and, quickly rolling up sleeves and trousers, spring into the water. An instant later he held up something in his hand, his shirt sleeve dripping with the water.

"The red *miriok!*" he cried. "See! Mr. Kit-ze must have dropped it as he leaned over packing the things."

Yes, it was the red *miriok.*

"Oh, its eyes are shinier than ever!" cried Joyce. "Guess that's cause the water washed 'em. It's the



"YES, IT WAS THE RED MIRIOK!"

same horrid, ugly thing I've seen Mr. Kit-ze pressing in his hands."

"Oh," said Helen, "if Mr. Kit-ze could only know!" Even as she spoke, Mr. Kit-ze was seen coming rapidly toward the river.

CHAPTER IV

A STOWAWAY

MR. KIT-ZE had left the pony in town and now came on at a rapid dog-trot. He was covered with dust and perspiration, and his hair, which had been shaken from its knot, was now partly hanging in much disorder down his back. When he had first rushed away, it had been with the thought that the *miriok* had been left at home, that it had in all probability dropped from his clothing as he slept. But as a rigid search failed to reveal it, he at length came to the conclusion that he had dropped it in or near the river while helping to load the sampan. He had stooped over many times, he knew. Why hadn't he thought of that ere coming away? Yes, the first search ought, by all means, to have been made in and around the sampan. But then he had been so excited over his loss he hadn't taken the time to reason about it at all.

Now he would hasten back to the boat and resume there the search for the *miriok*. Oh, he must find it, or failing, secure another like it. He could not think of going on the journey without his *miriok*, for would not disaster be sure to befall him if he did? But where was such another as this *miriok* to be had? As he recalled with what difficulty this one had been secured, Mr. Kit-ze grew more and more excited over his loss. Oh, he must return to the river at once! as there was a chance that he had dropped the *miriok* there.

Thus Mr. Kit-ze, coming in sight of the sampan, saw Clarence standing in the water and holding something at arm's length over which all were exclaiming. It took only a steady glance to show him what it was. The next moment, with a ringing cry, he endeavored to increase his pace, lost his footing, and went rolling down the slope, stopping just at the water's edge. It was Helen who reached him as he regained his feet. She had taken the *miriok* from Clarence, and was holding it toward Mr. Kit-ze, saying in her softest, gentlest tones:

"Here, Mr. Kit-ze, is something of yours that Clarence has found in the river. We were so sorry when we knew you had lost it, and are glad now that it can be returned to you."

With a little cry of delight he took the *miriok* from her, clasped it against his breast, prostrating himself before her almost to the ground. This he did the second and even the third time.

The sudden coming of Mr. Kit-ze, his mishap, and the scene that followed between him and Helen on the

river bank had formed considerable of a diversion for a part of the crowd. Even the excitement of Mr. Chefoo's still unsatisfactory interviews with the polemen had, for a time, paled before this newer and greater one. Ere she could extricate herself Helen was surrounded by quite a rabble. Many faces were pressing up about her, but there was one that attracted her attention in such a way that it startled her. It was a somewhat worn and haggard face, with restless, piercing eyes, and a nervous twitching of the lips that impressed itself upon Helen the moment she saw it. She noticed that its owner's gaze soon left her face and fixed itself in the direction of Mr. Kit-ze. The eyes had now a startled look. They were fastened upon the *miriok* that Mr. Kit-ze was still holding against his breast, but in such a way that it showed plainly. Helen noted this riveted gaze, as she also saw his lips moving. By this time her position had become very unpleasant. She felt too, a little chill of fear as she looked at this man. Was his mind upset? However, Mr. Kit-ze, having recovered his senses along with his *miriok*, was equal to the emergency. He safely conducted her out of the surging crowd and to the sampan.

Mr. Reid and Mr. Wilburn, with Mr. Chefoo, being informed of the return of Mr. Kit-ze, joined them as rapidly as they could in view of the crowd that bore them company at the sampan. Considerable satisfaction was expressed at the finding of the *miriok*, though the two missionaries some hours later expressed themselves quite vigorously to each other on the subject.

Mr. Kit-ze, who had by this time profusely apologized for his sudden departure, was as anxious as the others to be off. There was no need to delay another moment, he assured them. He motioned to Mr. Chefoo to take his place in the stern, while he, grasping his long pole, took a similar position in the bow.

"Hurrah!" cried Joyce, "we are off at last."

He stood up in his delight, clapping his hands and, as the boat was given a sudden turn at that moment, he assuredly would have tumbled over the side into the river had not Mallard caught him.

"Better keep your eye on the polemen hereafter," Clarence advised him, "ere you try any acrobatic performances on a sampan."

They found some difficulty in getting away from the crowd, many of whom followed the sampan for some distance into the water. These Mallard finally turned back by the happy thought carried into execution of tossing a handful of "cash" toward the shore. The last they saw of the village was the scrambling forms in the water, and the line of low hovels, built of mud-smeared wattle, with no vestige of windows and with their black smokeholes plainly defined.

Yes, they were off at last, really afloat on the glorious Han, *the* river of Korea, which, in two branches, sweeps almost across the peninsula, forming two great waterways, navigable for flat-bottomed craft for more than two hundred miles.

They found the river teeming with moving life. In addition to the flatboats there were many junks passing

back and forth, for the Han is the great artery of commerce for the eastern provinces. Those going into the city were laden with produce, pottery, bundles of faggots for firewood, and the like, while those coming out held cargoes of merchandise, both home and foreign, and salt from the seacoast.

Some of these junks were very old. They carried prodigious sails, despite their rotten timbers, and looked as though they might turn over at any moment. The most of them creaked horribly, and when our friends in the sampan heard one for the first time, they thought for a moment it was some great beast in terrible pain. When they found out their mistake a hearty laugh went around.

Though the sun was now quite high, and its rays very warm, yet Mr. Kit-ze knew the stream so well that he could keep near to the bank. Thus for much of the way they had the shade from the trees and from the overhanging bluffs. They found their curtains too, much protection. Their little sitting room was very cozy and comfortable. Helen had brought some oilcloth matting for the floor of the sampan, and a little oil stove that they could light when the air was damp and disagreeable. Here too were cushions, one or two folding chairs, and the bedding which the girls were to use at night, together with the oilskin cases in which they kept their clothing, a small supply of books, writing materials, etc. In the next compartment forward Mr. Reid and Mr. Wilburn had stored their effects, as they were to occupy it jointly at night. Here all would dine

when they were afloat; here too, the service of morning and evening prayer would be held. The three boys slept and kept their effects in the compartment just behind that of the girls. The straw roof along the ridgepole extended over all, even for a part of the way over the small, boxlike quarters of the two boatmen. In addition our party was provided with oilcloths for the better protection of the stores, and with mosquito netting.

"This is fine, even finer than sailing on the Hudson at home!" declared Dorothy, her eyes sparkling with enthusiasm.

"Or the noble Mississippi, down in our Southland," added Helen. "How pleasant this is! Oh, I had no idea it could be so delightful!"

"You just wait, my sister, until you strike some of the rapids," admonished Clarence, his face taking on a very solemn expression, "and begin to roll about like loose apples in a cart, or find your feet hanging where your head ought to be. Then I'm no prophet if you don't completely change your form of expression."

"Oh, for shame!" cried both girls in a breath.

"I think it is real mean of you," declared Helen, "to try to spoil our enjoyment of the present by introducing into it the suggestion of those terrible things that await us. As for myself, I believe in enjoying what is sweet and good while we have it, without borrowing trouble with reference to what is in the future."

"A philosophy in which I heartily agree," said Dorothy.

There was indeed much to make the trip delightful, for the beauties of the spring were all around them, in the sky, in the water, in the green knolls overhanging the river. The stream continued to be quite shallow. At some places it gurgled over the rocks only a foot or so below the sampan. They came now and then to where the cattle waded knee deep in the lush grasses. These turned to view them in mild-eyed astonishment as they passed by chatting and laughing, then went on with their grazing. Flocks of mandarin ducks and wild geese flew by ; some of the latter even swam close to the sampan. There were too, numbers of the imperial crane, and once in a while a pink ibis wading along the edge of a rice field.

Clarence took his gun to shoot one of these, but Helen and Dorothy began to beg for its life. "We don't want to eat it, so why destroy it?" asked Helen.

"Oh, wouldn't you girls like a wing each for your hats?" asked Clarence a little mischievously.

"Oh, no indeed," declared Dorothy. "No bird wing for me! You know that well enough, Master Clarence," and she looked at him reprovingly.

"Well, the truth is," confessed Clarence, "I want it for my cabinet. I know a young Japanese in Seoul who has promised to show me how to stuff all I bring back. In the meantime he has taught me how to preserve them while on the trip."

"If you must do it then in—in the cause of science," and here Helen looked at him quizzingly, "wait until we can't see you commit the murder, won't you?"

"All right," assented Clarence cheerfully. "But see here, sister," with earnest protest, "don't call it murder."

"Well, the cruelty of sport then," corrected Helen.

At that moment a shout from Joyce attracted their attention. "Oh, look at the pheasants!" he cried. "Quick! Clarence, I know you can shoot one or more of them if you try."

Sure enough, there were the pheasants right along the edge of the rice field, fine, fat fellows, and many of them.

"Be careful," warned Mr. Reid. "Examine the surroundings well before you fire. There might be some one near."

Assured that there was not, Clarence raised his gun. "Beg pardon, girls," he said slyly, as he adjusted it to his shoulder. "Pheasants are *so* good to eat."

They gave a little exclamation, then quickly covered both eyes and ears. The next moment a report rang out, followed instantly by another. When the smoke cleared away five of the birds were seen in their last flutterings.

"Now, how are we to get them?" asked Mallard.

"Why, sure enough, I didn't think of that!" exclaimed Clarence in dismay. "We can't carry the sampan close enough, that's certain."

Mr. Chefoo was now seen throwing off his sandals and rolling up his pantaloons, while Mr. Kit-ze, holding the sampan steady by means of his long pole, was giving him some directions. The next moment Mr.

Chefoo sprang over the side of the sampan and into the water. He slipped once or twice as he was trying to make headway over the rocks, and two or three times

"HE BEGAN TO SHAKE HIM VIGOROUSLY."

also, he was seen to mire; but notwithstanding these difficulties he reached the birds all right, and was soon returning with them. As he came again to the side of the sampan it was toward the compartment occupied by the boys, the one in the rear of that in which all had been

sitting since the boat left Han-Kang. He placed his hand upon the side of the boat to vault upward, but as he did so a quick exclamation escaped him, which the next moment changed to a decided whoop as Mr. Chefoo landed full in the compartment. A second or so later what was the astonishment of all when he dragged into view by the neck of his blouse a man, and began to shake him vigorously. To Helen was given something more than astonishment. Her heart leaped up, then almost ceased to beat. For the face exposed to view by Mr. Chefoo was the same she had seen on the river bank at Han-Kang with the glittering eyes fixed upon the red *miriok* Mr. Kit-ze held.

CHAPTER V

BEFORE THE MAGISTRATE

THE man made no effort to resist Mr. Chefoo, neither did he offer a word of protest, but stood silent and sullen, his lean face leaner than ever in its side view, his eyes half closed and gazing steadily downward.

"The rogue!" cried Mr. Wilburn. "He was there for no good purpose. Come, sir, what have you to say for yourself?"

But still the culprit made no answer. He only raised his eyes and let them sweep past Mr. Wilburn, past them all to Mr. Kit-ze, and rest there with a deep and burning glance.

"Speak to him, Mr. Kit-ze," said Mr. Reid. "Find out what was his object in concealing himself in the sampan. It may be," he continued charitably, "that he wanted to steal a ride to one of the villages."

But Mr. Kit-ze, instead of obeying this request,

shifted himself a little farther away from the man, and seemed to be intent on something in the river.

"I think Mr. Kit-ze doesn't want to get mixed up in any trouble," said Mr. Wilburn in an undertone. "He probably fears it may end in his having to appear before a magistrate. That always means a fine, you know, whether one is in the right or the wrong. It is evident, brother, that we must adjust this matter ourselves with Mr. Chefoo's help, since Mr. Kit-ze plainly doesn't want to take a hand in it."

But neither threats nor persuasions could elicit a word of reply from the man. Even Mr. Chefoo's fine speeches failed.

"Can he be deaf and dumb?" asked Mr. Reid finally.

"No, father, he is not," replied Helen positively.

All eyes were now quickly turned to her, astonishment plainly written on the faces.

"Why, my daughter, how do you know?"

"Because, father, I saw him in the crowd that surrounded me for a few moments on the bank of the river at Han-Kang. I distinctly heard him talking to himself, though I could not understand the words. I thought at the time," she continued, "from the way in which he regarded Mr. Kit-ze, that they might be acquaintances."

As Helen spoke these last words, she turned her head so as to get a view of Mr. Kit-ze, but he still persistently kept his face turned away, while he seemed to be making aimless search in the river with his pole. He

was assuredly doing nothing toward the progress of the boat, since that still remained stationary in the little rocky inlet toward which he had dexterously steered it when Mr. Chefoo had started for the birds.

Desiring that he should understand what Helen had suggested, Mr. Reid repeated it to him. The man was no acquaintance of his, Mr. Kit-ze emphatically declared.

"I think we had better pitch him into the river," said Mr. Chefoo, "and leave him to get out as best he can."

"Yes," said Clarence, "he deserves a ducking, if no more."

"No, we won't be so cruel as that," Mr. Reid replied, "although he may have been after no good. We'll go ashore at the next village and leave him."

"But first," said Clarence, "hadn't you better search him? He may have taken something of value."

"Yes, uncle," said Mallard, "we ought to do that."

To this both Mr. Reid and Mr. Wilburn consented; but, though close investigation was made, nothing was found on the man, nothing, at least, to which they could lay claim.

Mr. Reid gave the signal for the sampan to be headed again up the river. In the meanwhile, Clarence and Mallard kept watch upon the man, who had now assumed a squatting posture upon the floor of the sampan. To their surprise he began to mutter to himself. But even to Mr. Chefoo the words were unintelligible; all except the part of one sentence. In this Mr. Chefoo said had occurred the words, "Marble Pagoda,"

but he was evidently still as much mystified as the others.

The village to which they soon came was one of considerable size, picturesquely situated in the midst of chestnut groves. There were too, many beautiful clumps of the umbrella pine over which vines of red and white roses luxuriantly abloom were running riot.

A curious crowd swarmed around them at the landing. There were many in it who had never seen a foreigner. The soft hair and white skins of our friends called forth the most intense curiosity. Ridiculous too, were some of the comments. Question after question was directed to them. Some of these Mr. Chefoo answered. To others he paid no attention.

Who were they? Whence had they come? Were their families respectable? Did their ancestors occupy tombs on the hillside? Could they take off their eyes and pull out their teeth as it had been reported that they could? All of these and many more came in rapid succession.

When it was learned that they wanted to put a man ashore a great hue and cry was at once raised, and it was positively declared that this could not be done until the magistrate was seen and consulted. Thereupon, the magistrate's runners, six in number, appeared and assumed control of their movements. These runners were gorgeous in light blue coats, wide pantaloons of white, and big hats with red tassels.

Yes, the magistrate must be seen, they declared. Nothing else would do. In a rash moment Mr. Reid

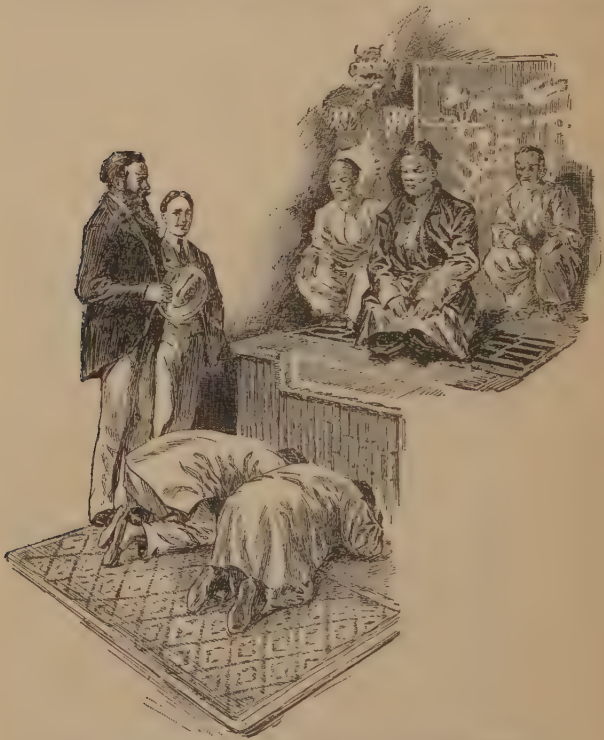
consented to see the magistrate. It is safe to say that had he known the result he would at once have headed his sampan off up the river again even with its objectionable occupant.

It was finally arranged that Mr. Reid, in company with Mr. Chefoo and the stowaway, should attend upon the magistrate while the others remained with the sampan. At the last moment Clarence begged to accompany his father, and consent was finally given. Mr. Reid could see no reason why the stowaway should be carried along with them, as he had really done nothing for which he could be punished. Their only desire was to leave him ashore. But the runners persisted that it was necessary that he too should go before the justice.

The magistrate was seated on the floor of a small platform over which matting was spread. Around him, also squatting on their heels, were two or three of his assistants. The chief official had on a robe of deep blue silk, slashed to the waist at intervals, and with pipings of orange silk introduced between. Only a small portion of his crimson trousers was showing. On his head was perched a little hat of glazed horsehair ornamented with crimson tassels.

Mr. Reid came into the room and very politely bowed to the magistrate, while Chefoo prostrated himself, as did the runners. Clarence, independent young American that he was, contented himself with saying, "Good day, sir," then began to use his eyes to their fullest extent.

The magistrate took no notice of their presence. He merely remarked in a high key to his associates that



"CHEFOO PROSTRATED HIMSELF TO THE MAGISTRATE."

foreigners were really demons, and that he couldn't see why they had ever been allowed in the country. As to himself, he had felt many times like setting up again,

on his own responsibility, the tablets which, prior to the treaty, had declared that all foreigners were cut-throats and robbers, and should be killed on sight.[1]

Each of these sentences Mr. Chefoo cheerfully translated to Mr. Reid.

"The old barbarian," declared Clarence. "I feel like giving him a shaking."

The magistrate now deigned to become aware of their presence. "Who are these who have dared to approach me?" he asked in a big, off-hand way, but all the while he was nervously regarding Mr. Reid and Clarence. Foreigners, he knew from experience, were not always the chicken-hearted people they were declared to be.

The runners told him.

"Well, what is you name, and whence do your come?" was asked of Mr. Reid.

The replies came readily.

"How old are you? Has your father gone and left you? and was he an honorable man?"

To each of these, in turn, was given a cheerful response.

"Well, what are you doing in the country, anyhow? Do they know you are away? Do you get a salary? How much is it?"

After all these queries and many more had been answered to the magistrate's satisfaction, he deigned to

[1] Before the treaty of Korea with the United States, while yet it was known as the Hermit Nation, tablets bearing inscriptions similar to that quoted by the magistrate were placed at intervals throughout the country.

hear the case that had been brought before him. When each detail had been gone over again and again, the magistrate put his head to one side, looked as wise as an owl for a few moments, and then proceeded to deliver himself of his decision.

By paying five Japanese *yen* (a *yen* is one dollar), the man could be left ashore ; but none of the rest could depart until he, the magistrate, visited the sampan and inspected its contents. He further added that he might come that evening if business permitted. If it did not, he would wait until morning. In the meantime they were to remain tied up where they were under the supervision of the runners.

On Mr. Reid's protesting against the injustice of having to pay such an amount for the mere privilege of putting a native ashore who had concealed himself in his sampan, the magistrate retorted by assuring him that he would then charge him, the missionary, that amount for having come ashore himself without first having communicated with him, the magistrate. Mr. Reid knew very well that such a proceeding was far from legal, as he had his passport which he had shown, but at the same time he felt it would be better for many reasons to pay the amount than to contest the point.

Fortunately, Mr. Reid had provided himself with a few of these valuable Japanese coins, which he carried on his person ; otherwise he would have been subjected to the further delay of sending to the sampan, as the magistrate at once let it be understood that he could not depart until the amount was in hand.

On their return to the sampan they found that the others too, had been having trials in their absence. The curiosity of the crowd had now become almost unendurable. Men, women, and children had even climbed upon the sampan. They had inspected everything. The two girls had called forth the deepest excitement and curiosity. It was their hair that caused the most comment, especially Helen's; it was so soft and bright. For Helen's hair, though her eyes were dark, was of a light chestnut color. One woman had even gone so far as to offer a dozen eggs for a piece of it. Then she wanted to handle it, but this Helen declined. The woman's eyes and her manner made her nervous. But Dorothy, more assured than Helen, took hers from its fastenings, shaking it about her shoulders, then stood beyond reach of the outstretched hands, laughing merrily at the expressions of countenance and the somewhat wild gesticulations.

"Oh, Dorothy, how can you do that?" remonstrated Helen.

"If it gives the poor things any enjoyment, I don't mind," replied Dorothy.

"But don't you see that the sight of it that way excites them the more?"

"Oh, it's good as a show," declared Joyce, almost shouting out in his delight. "Don't you mind sister, Miss Dorothy."

Things were in this hub-bub when Mr. Reid, Clarence, and the runners appeared. Mr. Reid joined in the effort to induce the people to withdraw from the

sampan, but without success. Then the thought struck him that he would appeal to the runners. It is safe to say he hadn't the least conception of the result or, much as he wanted to get rid of the people, he would have hesitated.

The runners at once charged pell-mell upon the surging crowd, shouting and yelling as though they were seeking to stampede a herd of cattle. Big hats, green coats, topknots, and wide trousers were soon jumbled together in a series of kaleidoscopic flashes, then quiet reigned once more around the sampan. The runners had done them this much good, if no more.

The sun had almost disappeared behind the neighboring hills, and the night, traveling fast in that region, would soon be upon them. Still the magistrate had not appeared. They felt now that he would not come until morning. They were much provoked. Mr. Kit-ze especially showed displeasure. He had planned to reach the next town ere tying up for the night. There had already been too much delay at Han-Kang. He felt considerable compunction over this, and had been doing his best ever since to make up for lost time, and now felt thoroughly exasperated over this unnecessary detention. But there was no other course save to await the magistrate's pleasure.

Supper eaten, with curious eyes all around watching their every movement, Mr. Reid prepared for the evening service. "We will go ashore," he said to Mr. Wilburn, "and take Mr. Chefoo. The others can join in from the sampan."

They had no trouble to gather the people about them. Great was the wonder that spread as the services proceeded. A hymn was sung, a prayer made, a Bible lesson read, which Mr. Chefoo explained. Then with Mr. Chefoo still as interpreter, Mr. Reid began to speak to them. His words were about Jesus, our one ever-loving, steadfast friend. Exclamations of surprise, then of interest, began to be heard. "Could it be possible," they asked each other, "that there was One in the world who could love as this one loved? who could and did give his friendship 'without money and without price'?"

As Mr. Reid ceased speaking, an old man approached him. Would the honorable teacher tell him again the name of this wonderful Friend? When told he kept repeating it over and over. Other touching incidents occurred. Many questions were asked. When Mr. Reid lay down to sleep that night, it was with the happy feeling that more than a passing impression had been made upon some hearts, as it was also with the determination that he would come again to break the bread of life to these hungry souls.

Even when the crowd had left the sampan, scattered by the impetuosity of the runners, Helen still felt nervous. The persistency with which the women had pressed about Dorothy and herself, their incoherent words, burning glances, and fierce gestures had wrought her up to a high pitch of excitement. It was a long while ere she could go to sleep, even though her father assured her that it was to the interest of the runners to

keep close watch upon the sampan. When at last Helen fell into slumber, it was to be disturbed by unpleasant dreams. In the midst of one of these she awakened with a start. She surely was conscious now, and what a moment of horror it was! for a rough hand was feeling its way along the meshes of her hair. a voice she knew from both tone and accent was no friendly one, was muttering in a manner that made her heart almost stop its beating.

CHAPTER VI

A FRIENDLY HAIL

HELEN'S first impulse was to scream, but with a great effort she controlled herself. Then, reaching up quickly, she grasped the hand between both of her own, holding on to it tightly. Instantly there was a frightened exclamation, and a violent movement on the other side of the straw curtain almost against which Helen's head lay. The next moment, the hand was wrenched away, and she heard a heavy splash in the water. Peering out through the opening between the curtains, she saw two Korean women moving away from the sampan. Thus she knew her midnight fright had been caused not through any evil intention but from the exercise of pure curiosity. They had but carried into effect the desire for a closer inspection of her hair.

So soundly did the other occupants of the sampan sleep that none of them were aroused by this incident,

not even Dorothy. Thus it was an astonishing piece of news to them when Helen told it on the following morning.

Dorothy was overcome by admiration for Helen's coolness. "O Helen, are you sure you didn't scream, not the least little bit? Oh, I never could have taken it as you did," and she drew her breath quickly.

Others besides Dorothy had words of praise for Helen's fortitude. "Nine girls out of ten would have gone into hysterics," declared Clarence.

"Put the percentage lower," warned Dorothy, shaking her fist at him in well-feigned indignation.

"Well, seven out of ten then."

"Oh, that is much better."

It was long after breakfast when the magistrate condescended to appear. Then he kept them waiting an hour or more through his insatiable curiosity, for he must needs inspect everything in the boat, even to the faggots and the chicken coop. But at last they were off. They had been afraid that the man might attach himself to them again ere they left the village. However, up to the time of pushing off, they had seen nothing of him. He had been dropped on the way from the magistrate's the evening before, and evidently that was the last of him.

As they went along now, Mr. Reid and Mr. Wilburn were discussing the event, as well as the man's probable meaning when he had muttered the words "Marble Pagoda." Both missionaries knew of the old Marble Pagoda in Seoul, one of the curiosities of the place,

though, strange to say, not many seemed to care to go about it. The natives especially shunned it, that is, a large percentage of them did. They declared that it was filled with demons and haunted by all kinds of evil spirits. It stood in one of the foulest parts of the city, just back of a narrow alley, and all around it were clustered wretched-looking hovels. It was said to be more than seven centuries old. It had been originally thirteen stories, but during the Japanese invasion of three centuries before, three stories had been taken off. Many of the chambers contained the richest carvings, especially that known as the room of the Five Hundred Disciples. That had the images of many of the Hindu divinities.

"I understand," said Mr. Wilburn, "that several bits of detached carving, some of them representing deities, and others the various stages of the progress of Buddha toward Nirvana, or the Buddhist heaven, have been found in the old pagoda up to a time within recent years. There is the story, not very old, of the young assistant of one of the Buddhist priests at a monastery in the mountains, who nearly forfeited his life by stealing one of the images that had been brought from the pagoda, a very rare and valuable one, by the way. But he escaped by the narrowest chance, though the priest hunted and hunted him for a long time, and may be doing it yet, for all I know."

"What a fortunate thing for our missionary labors," remarked Mr. Reid, "that Buddhism was long ago abolished throughout the kingdom, and only a little

colony of the priests allowed here and there in remote places."

"Ah, my brother, but there are the horrors of demon worship with which to contend, and the stonelike barriers of ancestral worship to break away. The former is as bad as Buddhism, where it has taken deep hold."

"As it has in our sampan man here," observed Mr. Reid with a sigh. "Oh, if I could only see some impression made on him by our teachings, some little inclination toward the truth as it is alone found in the pure gospel of Jesus."

"Do not despair. He may turn to the better way in time. It seemed to me during the services last evening that he listened more intently than I had ever seen him. He seemed to be impressed too, by the questions that were asked, especially by the earnest ones of the old man."

"Oh, but he is so persistent in his devotions to that wretched little image he has. Only this morning I saw him fondling it. Sometimes I feel like taking it from him and pitching it far out into the stream."

"Oh but, father," said Helen earnestly, now joining the conversation because she felt that she must, "that would not be best, believe me."

"But how are we to teach them a better worship until we take their miserable idols from them?"

"Oh, father, we mustn't tear down to build up. If a man were living in an old and insecure house, we wouldn't pull it down over him, for fear of the damage

it would do. If we were his true benefactors, we would simply invite him away from the old and into a better one."

"Well said!" declared Mr. Wilburn, his eyes shining. "You are a true reasoner, Miss Helen."

"But so long as they have these horrid images that they believe can counteract the evil effect of the demons, they will go on worshiping them. We must get them away."

"But not by compulsion, father."

"How then, Helen?"

"By love." She reached out and took his hand as she said the words, and began to pat it softly. Her lips trembled but her eyes met his bravely.

"Yes, my dear, yes, I know. When the heart is touched, love is the thing then with which to win them. But you can't pelt a stone wall with cotton, Helen, and hope to make any impression."

"But, my father, if cannon were used, what would be the result? Only devastation. We can't drive these poor things away from their idols. We must coax them."

"A woman's way, Helen. But, my daughter, you are doubtless right," he said a moment later. "I get so provoked at their persistency, their blind infatuation, I feel that I must use force, or at least warn them of God's wrath if they persist in their idolatry."

"Tell them of God's love ever waiting to receive them, you mean, father?"

"Yes, of God's love," repeated Mr. Wilburn, his

eyes moistening as he looked at Helen, "the warm sunlight, gentle yet powerful, the one agent that, using no force, yet accomplishes what force cannot."

They made pleasant progress all that day and the next. The views of the river and from the river grew more and more picturesque. They had now passed beyond the range of hills on the highest point of which stood the fortress of Nam Han, with its garrison of Korean soldiers. The river had grown broader and its banks lower. They passed many beautiful islands and had more than one experience with rapids. While navigating these, Mr. Reid had insisted on the girls' going ashore attended by Mallard and Mr. Wilburn. This they did, joining the sampan a mile or so above after some rather exciting adventures with the natives. However, as there was no worse spirit displayed than that of curiosity, they suffered more annoyance than alarm.

Through a considerable part of that third afternoon they moved along in sight of several small villages inhabited by woodcutters and charcoal burners. At one of these Mr. Reid said he must stop, not only for the night but for much of the next day, for it was one that had been brought to the attention of his mission Board as an inviting field for the establishment of a station.

At first the people were alarmed when they caught sight of the strangers. But on the assurance of Mr. Che-foo and Mr. Kit-ze that all were friends, they released their chickens and their queer-looking little pigs,

not much bigger than rabbits, which they had begun to put in pens at the approach of the sampan. They listened eagerly to what the missionaries had to say, pressed closely to them during the services, and had many questions to ask, all of an earnest character.

The magistrate too, at this place, to whom Mr. Reid had brought letters, treated them cordially and offered to assist him in any way he could. The chief men were also friendly and assured the missionaries that if they wanted to come and teach the new doctrine, they should have respectful attention.

One thing in connection with their stay at the village caused special happiness to Mr. Reid. Mr. Kit-ze had not only paid deep attention during the services, but he had remained thoughtful for some time thereafter. He had also come to both Mr. Reid and Mr. Wilburn with questions.

They remained all the next day, which was Friday, and that night at the village. Early the next morning the sampan was heading again up the river.

"Where shall we spend the Sabbath?" asked Mr. Reid.

"At Yo-Ju, I think, exalted teacher," replied Mr. Kit-ze. "If we pass the rapids without ill-luck, and push on steadily, we can reach there by the fall of the night."

But they had trying times at the rapids, the longest and the most dangerous yet encountered, so that the late afternoon found them a good half-day's journey from Yo-Ju. They had now come to the mountains in

all their wildness and ruggedness. Silence fell upon the little party. No word could be spoken amid all that awe-inspiring beauty. Then Mr. Reid's voice broke the stillness as he repeated the ninety-seventh Psalm, "The Lord reigneth."

Though the way was so wildly picturesque on either side, yet the river at this place flowed peacefully along, washing about the shore of green islets or lapping the steep banks with a gentle murmur.

Suddenly, from the midst of some overhanging vines near which they were passing, there came a loud hail. Then a voice added in very good English: "Pause, friends! O exalted teacher, do I see you once more?"

"Why, that voice sounds familiar," said Mr. Reid. "Head the sampan toward the cliff, Mr. Kit-ze, and let us see what it means."

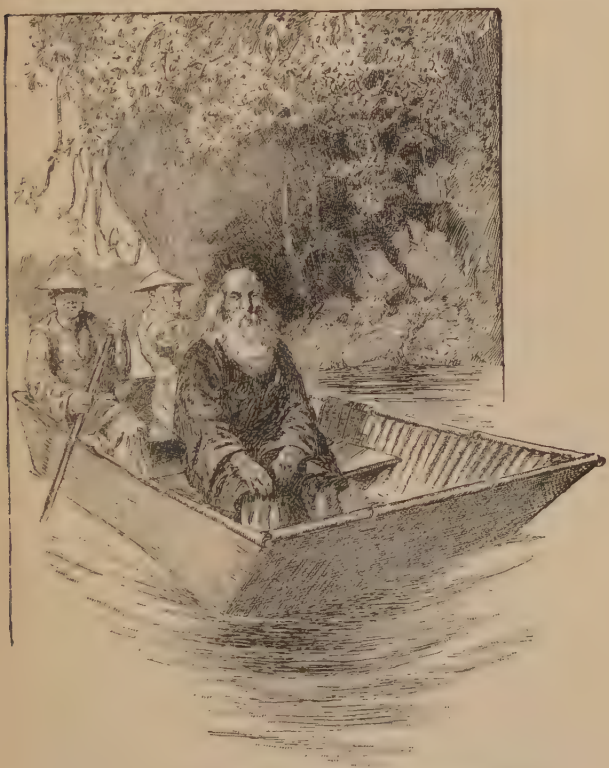
Mr. Kit-ze had no more than started to obey when a small flat boat came out from the overhanging bank and made toward them. It had three occupants, an elderly man who was sitting midway of it, and two younger ones who were propelling it. The old man was bolt upright despite his years, and made an interesting and picturesque figure with his snow-white hair, which, as is altogether unusual in Koreans, was falling about his shoulders, and with his partly civilized dress.

"Why, it is Mr. Ko!" cried Joyce.

"Yes," said Helen, a smile breaking over her face, "it is he, sure enough. Oh, how glad I am!"

"Old friend," cried Mr. Reid delighted, "can it be that I greet you again?"

"Yes, exalted master. Your old servant heard you were coming up the river. So, lo, since the evening



"THE OLD MAN WAS BOLT UPRIGHT, DESPITE HIS YEARS."

of yesterday he has been watching for you."

Mr. Reid now introduced Mr. Ko to Mr. Wilburn

and the others. The old Korean had lived for years at the capital. There he had known the missionary and his family through three or four years. During two of these he had lived at the mission as gate-keeper and errand man. Mr. Reid had heard that he had inherited some property and had gone away from Seoul.

The old man was quite a character. He had shown considerable devotion to the missionary and his family, but Mr. Reid, with all his efforts in Mr. Ko's behalf, had never been able to get the old man further than the admission that the Jesus doctrine was a very fair sort of doctrine and, if he only had the time, he would give himself over to the practice of it.

Now the old man was delighted at seeing the missionary and his children again. They must spend some time with him, he declared. Everything had been prepared for them. He had even secured a cook who could give them the food as they liked it. Oh, this was a wonderful man, indeed. Only yesterday he had come. "The good spirits sent him," asserted Mr. Ko, "I am certain they did."

Nothing would do the old man but that Helen, at least, must have a glimpse of this wonderful cook the moment she reached the dwelling.

"There he is," said Mr. Ko, with the delight of a child, pointing through an opening into the kitchen.

A tall figure was bending over the *ang-pak*, or great rice jar. At sound of Mr. Ko's voice he raised his head and glanced around. It was the stowaway of the sampan.

CHAPTER VII

AN ENTREATY

HELEN uttered an exclamation, then moved toward Mr. Ko. He read the expression of her face quickly.

"You know him?" he asked.

"I do not know him, but I have seen him. He was on the sampan with us after we left Han-Kang."

"Why, he did not tell me that! He only said that he had seen the honorable teacher and that he was coming. But no matter," continued Mr. Ko, and looking encouragingly toward the man. "He did not tell me because he had some reason not to. It is all right," he added cheerfully. "You may go on with the cooking."

"I know him," he said, turning again to Helen. "He was my neighbor in Seoul two years ago. He is a good sort of fellow, only there seems to be something on his mind. I don't understand that. Never did."

A deep perplexity now came to Helen. She could not decide whether or not to let the others know of the presence of the man at Mr. Ko's. She finally reached the decision to tell her father and Clarence and maybe Dorothy. There was, perhaps, after all, nothing wrong about the man. He had really done nothing to arouse their suspicions, only remained silent and sullen when he was questioned. She knew that her father believed that he had merely been stealing a ride. The only mysterious thing about him at present was his having so swiftly preceded them to Mr. Ko's. She afterward learned that he had fallen in with another sampan almost as soon as he had left them, and had worked his way up the river. While they lingered at the villages he had traveled.

Though Mr. Ko had adopted some of the ways of civilization, he still ate very much after the Korean fashion. Thus when they sat down to supper it was at little round tables not more than a foot or a foot and a half high. Instead of cloths, they were covered with sheets of glazed paper. Rice was the principal diet. It was set in an earthenware bowl near the center of each table. In addition there was a soup of beef and onions thickened with barley, a batter bread made of flour and oil and a slight sprinkling of sugar, chicken curry, eggs, and rice fritters. Mr. Ko also had tea, a rarity for the rural districts of Korea.

As Mr. Ko, Mr. Kit-ze, and Mr. Chefoo ate, they made a great noise with their mouths. This was done to show their appreciation of the viands, for in Korea,

the greater the noise made while eating, the more forcefully defined is the compliment to the food.

Mr. Ko's house was much better than that of the average farmer. It was built of poles, mud-daubed, but the walls of the principal rooms were covered with paper. There were little windows of thick glazed paper while the doors were set in frames of light bamboo. The sleeping arrangements consisted principally of mats with blocks of wood for pillows. In the winter the beds were made over the brick flues that ran through the rooms connected with the great oven where the baking was done. Thus, in winter, to sleep in a Korean house means to roast and freeze by turns, for while the fire is kept up it is hot indeed, and when it is allowed to go out then "cold as a stone" gives the literal condition of a brick bed.

The house stood in a grove of mulberries, for to his other pursuits Mr. Ko added that of silkworm raising. There were clumps too, of the walnut and persimmon, with vines of the white and yellow clematis tangled amid their branches. Here the birds built, and here they poured forth their morning songs or chattered to their mates as they were going to bed at night. In front were the fields of wheat and barley, and farther down, in the very heart of the valley, the crops of rice. As it was near the end of April, the barley was already in ear and beginning to take on its russet coloring.

Mr. Ko, being an old bachelor, there were only men about the house. He had a saying with reference to which Clarence teased Helen and Dorothy rather un-

mercifully. It was to the effect that where there were women there was sure to be trouble.

"Oh, but Mr. Ko likes girls!" asserted Helen. "You can't make me believe otherwise, Master Clarence. He and I have been too long good friends."

"What was that I heard him say last night?" asked Dorothy, a mischievous light in her eyes, "about sons and how they were like dragon's teeth in the sides of their parents?"

Clarence looked rather sheepish at this quick turning of the tables on himself, and in a moment or so dexterously changed the conversation.

On the following day, which was the Sabbath, two services were held in Mr. Ko's mulberry grove. At the first not many were present, but by afternoon scores had flocked to the place from the neighboring farms and from the village. Curiosity was plainly depicted on all the faces, but as Mr. Reid proceeded, it changed to eager attention on the part of several. Mr. Chefoo made a good interpreter. He was both careful and earnest. Already the sweet, simple truths the missionary taught were beginning to make their appeal to his own heart. It was the old story of Jesus and his sweet ministrations to men, his sympathy for them, his understanding of their needs, the great, warm, deep love that took in all, even the poorest and humblest.

"And this Jesus is the same now as then," continued the missionary. "He is waiting to enter each heart and to possess it, to have our lives drawn nearer to his own, to bestow upon us the sweet knowledge of that

companionship with him that may be ours through all the way."

The services were barely concluded when Mr. Kit-ze came to ask questions. Gladness was in Mr. Reid's heart as he saw the moved, wondering look upon the boatman's face. He wanted to know if this Jesus, who could do so much for men, who wanted to be their friend, was very rich and powerful? Could he bestow honor and wealth as well as friendship?

Mr. Kit-ze was told that the provisions of honor and wealth did not enter into Jesus' plans for the happiness of his people. He himself had shown his condemnation of the grasping hand, the covetous heart, by declaring that he who desired to be the greatest should be the least of all and servant to all.

"But he gives that to us which is better than all the honor and riches of earth," continued Mr. Reid; "he gives us contentment of life and peace of heart. Would not you think these far better than money or land, my friend?"

Mr. Kit-ze did not know. He had thought that it would indeed be a very fine thing to possess land and cattle and so comfortable a home as that of Mr. Ko.

This, then, had been the thought uppermost with Mr. Kit-ze when contemplating the character of Jesus, the Divine Friend, and the thought of the possible worldly elevation the friendship might bring him. The missionary felt a deep pain at his heart as he realized whither Mr. Kit-ze's thoughts had led him. But at the same time there was something in his attitude to

inspire hope. Mr. Kit-ze had been impressed. That was plainly evident. His mind was in a deep whirl of thought. Other and better things would surely be evolved from it in the end. Many times during that day he made fervent petition for Mr. Kit-ze.

Mr. Kit-ze's perplexity increased as one thought after another came to him. The exalted teacher had not answered as he had hoped. All was still so uncertain, so unsatisfactory. Ah, now he knew what he would do! He would go to the daughter of the honorable teacher, to her who had the soft voice, the gentle ways, the kind heart. She could make it plain, she would tell it so that it would reach his understanding.

Helen's heart leaped as Mr. Kit-ze asked her the questions. She could see how deeply in earnest he was. Oh, could it be that he was at last awakened, that he would search until he had found the truth, would accept Jesus as the one faithful Friend? His first and second questions aroused these thoughts; but the third, how it disturbed her, as it had also disturbed her father. It was the same question about earthly honor and wealth.

"Dear Mr. Kit-ze," said Helen, taking his hand, and at that moment he felt that he would have done anything for her, "those who truly love Jesus, who have taken him as their Friend, do not think of such things in connection with what Jesus does for them. They know that whatever is best for them he will send, that whatever of good gifts they will use happily, he

will bestow. But further than this they do not go, for, Mr. Kit-ze, when once we have taken Jesus, we must trust him for everything. We must not question or ask him for this thing or the other. Thus, Mr. Kit-ze, if you had a worldly friend, one in whom you believed with all the mind, in whom you trusted with all the heart, would you not willingly follow that friend wherever he bade you go and take everything from him as meant for your good?"

"Oh, yes," said Mr. Kit-ze, "oh, yes."

"Well, thus it is with Jesus. When we take him for our Friend, truly take him, we do not require anything of him. We leave all that to him and only trust him. He loves us. Oh, how he loves, Mr. Kit-ze! He is the truest lover in all the world. Could he, or would he, then, do aught else but what is best for the one beloved?"

"Oh, daughter of the exalted teacher," said the boatman, his voice tremulous with some new-found emotion, "you have put that into Mr. Kit-ze's heart which will make him think, think!" He went away with his hand still pressed upon his heart and murmuring to himself.

Helen had told her father of the presence of the stowaway in Mr. Ko's kitchen, and of her great surprise at finding him there.

"Oh, I suppose there isn't anything mysterious about it, Helen," her father made answer; "nothing to be dreaded from him, I know. He looked inoffensive enough, though sullen, and you remember we didn't

find anything on his person. I am only astonished at the rapidity with which he has made his way up the river; but from what you have since learned and have told me, that too is clear."

Helen was glad her father took the man's presence in this way. She really felt sorry for the poor fellow. He had looked at her so pathetically the evening before ere she left the kitchen with Mr. Ko, and had murmured something in which she caught the words, "No harm, no harm." His eyes had not then the burning look she had noticed when they were fixed upon Mr. Kit-ze. Instead, they were soft and pleading.

She was ready now to tell Clarence and Dorothy. They had walked down to the bluff for a view of the river and of the track of the setting sun as it moved across the water like some golden-freighted craft.

Clarence, boylike, whistled his astonishment at the communication. "Why, Helen, how did he ever manage to get here so far ahead of us?" he asked at length. "It seems almost incredible."

"On a sampan, as I have told you Mr. Ko informed me. There isn't anything so strange about that. What troubles me is the feeling that he is following us."

"I think this time we followed him," observed Clarence trying to be a little witty.

"But he was evidently awaiting us here."

"Then we'll ask him his business," declared Clarence.

"No, Clarence, no," entreated Helen. "That

"THEN, EXTENDING HIS HANDS, ENTREATED."

might be the worst thing. I am sure he means no harm. Let us wait and see if he attempts to follow us

away from here. Then we might inquire into his conduct.''

''I feel sorry for him,'' said Dorothy. ''I can't help it, though he may mean no good. He looked so pitiful when he was being dragged away to the magistrate. He was frightened too, but he didn't have the appearance of one who contemplated wrong-doing.''

''I feel in that way myself,'' said Helen. ''I——''

But ere she finished the sentence, they were attracted by the noise of a step behind them. Turning, they saw the one whom they were discussing. With a hasty movement he prostrated himself before them; then extending his hands, entreated: ''O friends, hear the story of poor Choi-So!''

CHAPTER VIII

THE STORY OF CHOI-SO

SUCH a pathetic story as it was for the most part! One that caused the young people to listen to it with the deepest interest.

Choi-So's mother had died when he was very young, too young to remember her. The woman who raised him had cruelly treated him. She had not only half-starved him, but she had often severely beaten him. Choi-So had not said it in so many words, but he gave his young hearers the impression that this treatment had so dazed him that his head was not altogether right. Sometimes he was like one in a mist, as he expressed it.

His father was a very religious man. He was a dreamer too, a bad combination, since when one is constantly wandering away in thought, many of the plainest duties that are allied to a religious profession are apt

to be neglected. He was a worker in straw. He made shoes and ropes and mats, the latter beautifully woven. He received a fair price for his work, and there was no reason why his child should have been starved except that the money that ought to have gone to his nourishment was appropriated to her own use by an unscrupulous woman while the father wove his mats and dreamed.

Mr. Ang-su, Choi-So's father, had spent many years of his life in Japan. There he had married Choi-So's mother. There too, he had acquired his deep religious convictions. He was a devout Buddhist. As he sat and dreamed his young son entered into many of these dreams, was, in truth, the chief figure therein. Far better would it have been could he have occupied even for half the length of time his father's practical thought. Thus it came about that at eighteen Choi-So was sent to one of the Buddhist monasteries in the mountains, there to be prepared for the priesthood. Five years were spent in the dreary, monotonous routine that made up his life there. So many times during each period of twenty-four hours, from midnight till midnight again, he must hasten to the temple at sound of drum or bell, there to prostrate himself on the stone floor before the bow-kneed, brass-faced god, repeating, "*Namu Amit abul! Namu Amit abul!*" (I put my trust in Buddha! I put my trust in Buddha!) One hundred and eight times he did this without stopping, to an accompaniment of bells, sometimes sounding soft and silvery, or again ringing out with harsh, loud clangor.

He was also taught to take no life, not even that of a mosquito. If one troubled him more than he could endure, the venerable abbot instructed him that he was simply to get up and "shoo" it gently out of the room. His fare was hard and unsatisfying, consisting all the year round of rice and pressed seaweed, for no one who lived to the glory of Buddha must touch meat. Sad to say, this life was just the one that appealed to the melancholy boy. He had inherited much of his father's religious concentration and dreaminess of manner. Instead of having the desire to run away from this hard life, he daily applied himself the more earnestly to the task of learning to please Buddha, of so living that he might attain *Nirvana!* That was his highest desire.

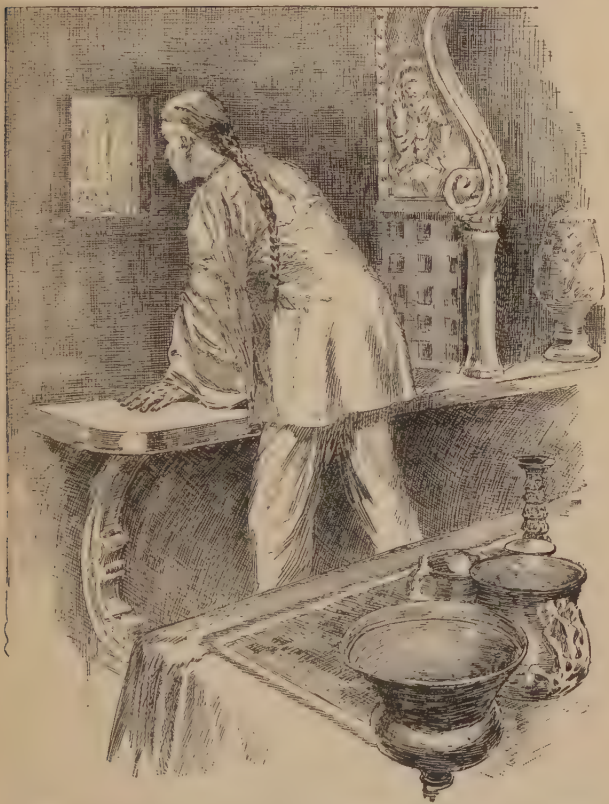
One day, just at the close of his five years, he came upon Mr. Kit-ze stranded upon the river bank, bruised and broken. He had had a desperate struggle for life in the rapids. Three ribs were broken and an arm badly injured. He had lost his cargo, and had very nearly lost his sampan ; but, injured though he was, he had managed to cling to the latter and to get it safely to shore. However, it would need much in the way of repairs ere it could be used again. Choi-So, in deep pity for the wounded boatman, went for help, and had him assisted to the monastery. Mr. Kit-ze was conducted through the great arched gateway and into the reception hall. There the venerable abbot had come to him, and uttered the words of welcome, "Peace be unto you," and had then bidden that he be led away and his wounds treated.

For two weeks Mr. Kit-ze had remained at the monastery. He had ingratiated himself into the favor of the priests. Especially had he won the trust and goodwill of Choi-So. The young man was his devoted attendant. The boatman was given many privileges. He was even permitted to look through a small sliding panel upon the priests at their devotions. This room, to which the monks were called so many times each day to their prayers, began to hold a deep fascination for Mr. Kit-ze. Its rich carvings, its many images, above all, the great bronze statue of the Buddha with the various smaller ones grouped about it, so chained his attention that for moments at a time he would continue to gaze as though spellbound.

Choi-So had explained to him the mission of these smaller images. They were to teach man the various stages through which he was to pass ere *Nirvana* could be attained. Thus they were helps in the progress of life. Any one of them could bring to mind what man hoped, what he inherited through the strength and the faithfulness of Buddha. Much of this was unintelligible to Mr. Kit-ze. He knew nothing of Buddha, nor cared to know. But the images represented something that did appeal to him. This much he understood, or at least thought he understood. Any one of them brought good fortune to its possessor. That is the way he had read Choi-So's explanation.

Mr. Kit-ze's mind was ripe for a suggestion of this kind. Among the losses he had sustained through the catastrophe in the rapids was one he felt more keenly

than the others. Deeply superstitious, as is the greater



"HE WAS PERMITTED TO LOOK . . . UPON THE PRIESTS AT THEIR DEVOTIONS."

part of his race, Mr. Kit-ze believed devoutly in the efficacy of certain charms. A grotesque figure he had

carried on his person for years had again and again helped him to elude the demons that waited for him in the rapids. But for this his sampan would never have had the many safe journeys through the dangerous parts of the river, and but for the loss of this image during the earlier part of his late struggle in the rapids, calamity would never have befallen. He must replace this charm, this wonderful image of protection and helpfulness. What better could be found than what was here represented in this chamber, sacred to the great god before whom the priests prostrated themselves, and of whose power they made such astonishing recitals? Had he not been informed of the marvelous things that could be accomplished through the possession of even one of the images, of the part each bore in the fortune of man? He could not enter the chamber himself. He must work through Choi-So.

Poor Choi-So was in a sore state of mind at that time. Again and again he had felt, as he had described himself, like one walking in a mist. His father had recently died. For weeks now he had remained unburied, a custom very prevalent in Korea until such a funeral as the mourners desire can be given. His savings had been squandered by the wife who had so ill-treated Choi-So. There was nothing with which to lay the corpse away as the dutiful son felt would be fitting. So he waited and waited, praying and hoping and longing for the means to do honor to his father, or else become a wretched, miserable son, despised of all who knew him. It was then that Mr. Kit-ze tempted him,

repeating the temptation until poor Choi-So had finally yielded. The image was stolen, but, to Mr. Kit-ze's shame, only a part of the price agreed upon had been paid. When Choi-So had followed him, beseeching the remainder, it was but to be cast off roughly. Another time he was threatened with the magistrate, and with exposure. This last threat drove Choi-So back to the monastery. But the theft had been discovered and traced to him. A companion priest informed him in time for Choi-So to make his escape ere the terrible punishment in store overtook him.

Since then he had been a wanderer. He knew that his brother priests had sent one of their number in pursuit of him. His one object now was to recover the image, return it, and suffer the consequences. He could never be happy again until he had done it. He could never attain *Nirvana* until reparation had been made and the image placed once more in the mystic circle about the Buddha. For three years now he had wandered in search of Mr. Kit-ze, but as the boatman had moved away from his old quarters at Seoul, poor Choi-So, for all his search, had never laid eyes upon him until that day on the river bank at Han-Kang.

This story had been told in a broken way, and as Choi-So had but a small knowledge of English and his youthful listeners far from a full one of Korean, it was only by putting it together piece by piece, one supplying a link here and another one there, that they finally understood him.

"Oh, friends," he entreated, holding out his hands

pathetically to his hearers, at the conclusion of his story, "pity the sorrows of poor Choi-So. Help him to recover that which is the only thing that can bring peace to him again!"

"The red *miriok!*" exclaimed Clarence, and looked at Helen significantly.

"Yes," said Helen, "the red *miriok.* I had already felt that it had something to do with this poor man's following us."

Then she told them of her impressions on the river bank as she had first noted Choi-So and the manner in which his gaze had been riveted upon Mr. Kit-ze and the red *miriok.* "Poor thing," she continued, her eyes fixed pityingly upon Choi-So, "it is all very serious to him, and we can see how he has suffered through it."

"But how can we help him?" asked Dorothy. Her sympathies too were deeply aroused. "Mr. Kit-ze will never give up the image, I fear," she continued.

"We might make him do it," said Clarence quickly, "or pay him to do it."

"No," said Helen emphatically; "we cannot. Neither will do."

"What then?" asked Clarence.

"We might win him to the better way," said Helen softly. "We might coax him to give up this wretched little image for the sweeter things we could help him to attain."

"What! Mr. Kit-ze?" cried Clarence incredulously. "Never! He is too hardened."

"Clarence, how wrong to say that! Has not God's love shown its power to reach even those more hardened than Mr. Kit-ze?"

"But what can we do for this poor fellow here?" repeated Dorothy.

Helen turned her eyes upon Choi-So. As she noted the lean and pallid face, the deep-set eyes in which the light of fanaticism burned steadily, courage, hope, both left her. "Oh, I am sure I don't know!" she cried in despair.

Just at that moment Mallard was seen hastening down the path toward them. From the manner in which he came they felt sure he was the bearer of a message of some kind. "I have bad news," he said as he approached.

"Oh, what is it?" cried Helen, thinking instantly of her father.

"Do not be alarmed, cousin," he hastened to assure her. "It is nothing so dreadful. There has been an accident. Mr. Chefoo slipped at a steep place on the river bank, fell, and has broken his arm."

CHAPTER IX

A THEFT

YES, Mr. Chefoo had broken his arm. It was too bad! for aside from the pain and discomfort that it gave him, how were they to get on with the sampan without him? It is true, it was not a very severe fracture, only one of the smaller bones having been broken; but it would be at least two weeks ere he could use it again. In the meantime, what was to be done? Mr. Kit-ze could not manage the sampan alone. Some one must help him pole as well as keep the boat within the proper channel. It would be a very one-sided and unsatisfactory progress if the sampan were propelled from only one end.

Mr. Ko thought of a half-dozen men who were at hand, but none were reliable. It would be better without them than with them, especially as there were rapids

to be passed. Mr. Ko was very much disturbed over the accident to Mr. Chefoo, because of its having occurred at his place. He was sure a demon had caused it. It was the demon in the well, he finally decided, since Mr. Chefoo had been at the well ere proceeding down the path where the accident occurred. The demon must be appeased, he declared, and forthwith proceeded to throw rice into the well. Now Mr. Chefoo's arm would rapidly mend, he asserted.

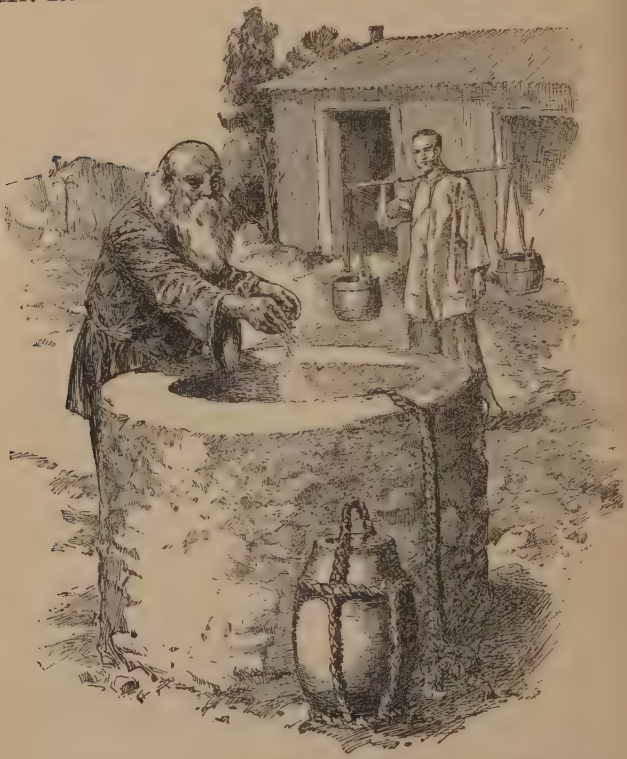
Monday morning had come, and still there seemed no prospect of resuming the journey to Yo Ju.

"We must get on," said Mr. Reid, "our time is limited. We must make some arrangement for an assistant for Mr. Kit-ze."

Mr. Chefoo had now a high fever and was unable to sit up. It had been decided to leave him with Mr. Ko until their return, which would be in about three days, as they were not going much beyond Yo Ju.

In the midst of their perplexity Mr. Ko came to them with a beaming face. He knew the very thing! Why had he not thought of it before? They could take Mr. Choi-So. Now that his honorable guests were about to depart, he, Mr. Ko, would not need his cook. Mr. Choi-So himself was anxious to go along with them. He had approached Mr. Ko on the subject. He was an excellent poleman, quick and careful. He had several times assisted in carrying sampans up and down the river, twice for Mr. Ko himself. Besides, he bore an excellent character. Mr. Ko knew him. He had known his father too.

"I see no reason why we shouldn't take him," said Mr. Reid.



"HE FORTHWITH . . . PROCEEDED TO THROW RICE INTO THE WELL."

But Mr. Wilburn opposed this. He had not liked the man's concealment of himself in the sampan, neither had he been favorably impressed by his appearance

on that occasion. His sullen, hang-dog look had betokened anything but innocence. He could have been after no good. Mr. Wilburn's suspicions had been strengthened by the presence of Choi-So at Mr. Ko's.

Neither Mr. Reid nor Mr. Wilburn had learned the story of the red *miriok*, or image of Buddha, as it ought more properly to be designated. The young people, after consulting among themselves, had decided to tell no one, at least not until they could agree on some plan. Mr. Choi-So had given them his confidence. He evidently trusted them and believed that they could help him. If he wanted the others to know too, then he would tell them. He showed plainly that he feared Mr. Wilburn and was not at ease with Mr. Reid. Helen and Clarence both felt that they wanted their father to know, but they respected Mr. Choi-So's feelings. Perhaps he would himself tell the missionary.

Things were in this unsatisfactory state when Mr. Choi-So's offer to attend them as poleman was made known. The young people were pleased. It was the very thing, they thought. It would give them more time to decide upon some action, for the desire was now keen with each one to secure the *miriok* from Mr. Kit-ze and return it to Mr. Choi-So.

"The poor fellow will go demented if we do not," declared Clarence. "He is half crazy on the subject, anyhow. We can at least try to give him peace of mind."

"I wish we could give him something else," added Helen wistfully.

"But we can't," asserted Clarence; "at least not now. His mind is too upset about the *miriok*. Besides, Mr. Kit-ze has really treated him dishonestly. He ought to be made to give the image back to him. The poor fellow has pinched and saved until he has the amount Mr. Kit-ze paid, so he told us."

"Oh," said Helen, "if only I could talk to this poor Choi-So so that it would go to his mind and then to his heart, how happy I should be! If only I could show him that this image for which he is willing to sacrifice life itself is only a wretched little piece of metal!"

"But he ought to carry it back," said Clarence.

"And run the chance of being thrown into a dungeon, fed on bread and water, and kept there perhaps for years without ever hearing of a single one of the sweet and precious things Jesus wants to do for him? Oh, it is dreadful! He had better lose the *miriok*."

"And lose his mind with it? No, my sister, believe me that is not the right way for poor Choi-So. Let us get the *miriok* for him—that is, if we can—and perhaps afterward we may induce him to return it by messenger and listen to us."

Mr. Wilburn was finally induced, through Mr. Reid's clear and forceful way of presenting the matter to him, to withdraw his opposition to Choi-So's accompanying them as poleman; but not so Mr. Kit-ze. He had been the last one to discover Choi-So's presence at Mr. Ko's, and this had been only a short time before the stowaway's offer to take Mr. Chefoo's place. The old boatman made quick and stormy objections. He

would not, he declared, permit such an idiot to handle a pole of his sampan, for he was one who had no sense for moving his hands two ways at once. If ever he had had any sense it was under his arm, for it certainly had never been put into his head for the lack of room there.

But after a time Mr. Kit-ze grew cooler and seemed, to some extent, to be ashamed of his outburst, especially as Helen had now drawn near to him and taking his hand, was gazing at him reproachfully.

"Don't say that, Mr. Kit-ze," she said. "You don't really know that he can't help you with the sampan, do you?" regarding him steadily. "Only try him, won't you? Think what it means to us to be delayed here. Oh, we must go on, and you must help us, Mr. Kit-ze, by your consent. Perhaps it will only be to Yo Ju, as we may find another poleman there to suit us."

Thus Helen pleaded, and little by little Mr. Kit-ze's heart relented, his opposition relaxed, till he at length agreed to Choi-So's accompanying them as far as Yo Ju. But the stipulations were that he was not to move from his end of the sampan, and at night he was to leave them.

"Mr. Kit-ze is afraid of him," commented Mr. Wilburn. "He can read the rascal in him as plainly as I can."

"I hope it will be proved ere we part from our poleman, that both you and Mr. Kit-ze are mistaken," said Mr. Reid earnestly. "I can't believe that there is

anything vicious in the man. He hasn't at all that appearance to me. To my eye it is more an anxiety to get up the river than anything else I can detect."

Mr. Ko was pleased that they had finally decided to take Mr. Choi-So. "You won't regret it," he asserted. "He'll take you over the rapids better than any one I know; and," he concluded, looking at Mr. Reid a little peculiarly, "it's my opinion you won't dismiss him at Yo Ju. At any rate, I'll have you a good poleman by the time you come back."

By ten o'clock they were ready to be off, having bidden good-bye to poor Mr. Chefoo after having spoken all the consoling words to him they could.

In honor of their departure, Mr. Ko had donned a spotless suit of white. He had also sought to enhance his appearance by adding an immense pair of spectacles, which he had purchased at considerable outlay, from an old scholar. It mattered not that one lens was entirely lacking and the other was so badly cracked that it was a question as to whether Mr. Ko could use the vision of that eye with any satisfactory effect. All the same, he stood upon the bank waving his fan majestically, his little black eye gleaming from out the great round space where the lens ought to have been, and all the time shouting out to them in Korean, "Come back again to-morrow!" That meant, "Return as soon as you can."

Mr. Choi-So soon proved his right to all the good things Mr. Ko had spoken of him. He was an excellent poleman, both alert and careful. He helped en-

gineer the boat safely through the rapids in a manner that called forth grunts of approval from even Mr. Kit-ze.

About four o'clock in the afternoon they came in sight of Yo Ju. Besides being a city of considerable size, it was noted as the birthplace of the queen, and the king had caused two or three public structures to be erected in her honor.

There were many sampans, junks, and other rude craft at anchor in front of the city, and they had much difficulty in making their way through them. But at length they reached the shore safely. They had not more than tied up when an immense crowd began to gather about the sampan, even wading out into the water. The crowd was not only curious, but annoying. They handled the clothes and hair of our friends, and even tried to run their hands over their faces. But to this not only protest but resistance was offered.

Soon after reaching the bank, Mallard had climbed out on an end of the sampan and steadied his camera for a snap of the city. He thought it a splendid opportunity, as the sun was falling full upon the great gateway and the queer looking buildings grouped near to it. He at once attracted the attention of the crowd. Great curiosity was aroused as to his intention, and soon men, women, and children were rushing toward him. They clambered up the side of the sampan. They pressed about him until there wasn't space to hold another foot. They poked fingers into eyes and ears and nose; they shouted in glee as they caught the flash

of the lens in the instrument, and tried to pull it out. In consternation Mallard endeavored first to protect himself, then his camera, and was finally pushed into the water, saving the latter from both a smashing and a wetting by the narrowest margin.

The same curiosity followed them as they went up into a gate tower for a view of the city. The crowd pressed about them so they could barely enter. Even after they began to ascend the stairs the curious throng crowded about them so that the entire space was filled. When they attempted to come down again, to their consternation they found they could not. They had finally to make their way back from the outside, a rough and somewhat dangerous undertaking. Fortunately neither was Joyce nor were the two girls with them.

"This will never do," said Mr. Reid. "We must get away from this terribly curious crowd, for the annoyance they give us will become more than a burden after a while. Mr. Kit-ze, is there no place, not so far away, where we can tie up without the prospect of having such curiosity as this to endure?"

"Yes, honorable teacher, not so far away is the temple of the great Dragon. There are overhanging trees, a quiet river bed, and not many people who will come to gaze."

"Then let us go there by all means. To-morrow morning we'll find our chance to enter the city."

They made their way out through the forest of river craft and up the stream again. The great temple stood

directly on the banks of the Han, some little distance from the city. It was a beautiful spot, picturesquely so, for in addition to the brick and stone pagodas that gleamed through the trees, there was a number of small islands clustered about, covered with low-growing verdure and spangled with the blossoms of the pink and white azalea.

The temple in itself had much with which they could occupy their time. Among other things was a quaint bell, in a perfect network of dragons, said to be more than five hundred years old. But as the sun was near to its setting as they came to anchor in a quiet spot along the banks, they decided to do no exploring for that afternoon.

Mr. Kit-ze had spoken truly, "there were not many who came to gaze." Though it was a kind of outlying village and had several hundred inhabitants, yet only a few of them appeared on the arrival of the sampan. Most seemed closely occupied with their pursuits. However, a little group of women and children pressed near to the sampan, but no one proved offensive except a *mutang* (sorceress), who, in the end, gave them considerable trouble. She contended that she must be given two *yen* so as to decide for them whether or not the Dragon would be pleased at their stay in the front of the temple. She finally fell to one *yen*, then to six hundred "cash," but still our travelers paid no attention to her.

She had an evil eye, Dorothy asserted, and further declared that she knew she could not sleep that night for thinking of her.

Mr. Kit-ze showed even more impatience with her than the others. They didn't need her divinations, he told her, for they had that with them that could overcome any evil from the dragon. Then he injudiciously gave her a view of the red *miriok*. How her keen little black eyes glowed as she caught sight of it! and the sudden look she cast upon Mr. Kit-ze made Helen, who was closely watching the scene, feel uneasy despite herself.

Helen had been earnestly regarding Mr. Kit-ze through a large part of that afternoon. There was that in his manner that at times disturbed her, but again it seemed as though hope were creeping into her heart. He had been absent-minded and dejected for much of the way, but now and then he had aroused himself. At such times he had turned with keen glances in the direction of Choi-So, studying every lineament of the young man's face, it seemed to Helen. Always these searching looks were bestowed upon Choi-So when he was not in turn regarding Mr. Kit-ze. Helen was sure that better feelings were stirring at the heart of Mr. Kit-ze on these occasions, for she could see how his eyes softened and his lips moved nervously as he continued to gaze.

According to agreement Choi-So had been dismissed as night approached; but Helen, who had been very observant, was sure he was not far away. Indeed, while walking on the bank for exercise, she had caught sight of his face from a small clump of bushes only a few steps from where she was. She decided at once

that she would not call attention to him. Her heart was tender for him. She did not believe that he would do harm. Soon silence settled down around the sampan, for its inmates had retired to rest. Several hours of the night passed away. All were supposed to be asleep except Mr. Kit-ze, whose watch it was. But, after a while, Mr. Kit-ze too yielded to slumber.

Suddenly Helen awoke. It was with a strange, restless feeling. It seemed to her that there had been an uneasy consciousness even in the midst of her slumber. She tried to go sleep again, but could not.

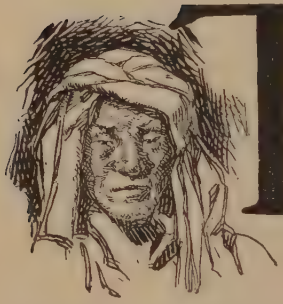
"I think the air in here must be a little too close," Helen thought after a few moments. She raised herself and leaned toward the heavy curtain of straw. Then she rolled it partly upward, secured it to the fastenings, and looked out. She was sleeping at the side of the sampan next to the shore. All was quiet. She could see no one. Then she let her eyes glance toward the bow of the boat. Mr. Kit-ze was huddled down in his little boxlike apartment sound asleep.

"Oh," said Helen, "this will never do! I must call my father to awaken him."

But even as she started to move toward her father's apartment, she stopped again, almost transfixed. A hand had cautiously made its way up the side of the sampan, and was now directing itself toward Mr. Kit-ze's breast.

CHAPTER X

AN ARRESTED SACRIFICE



THE hand moved nearer and nearer Mr. Kit-ze's breast; a moment more and it had buried itself in the folds of his robe. Even as Helen continued to gaze like one transfixed, ere yet she had the power to recover herself, a face appeared above the hand. But it was not the face she had expected to see—that of Mr. Choi-So. Instead, the moonlight showed her clearly the repulsive countenance of the old *mutang*.

There are moments when sudden excitement leads us into a line of action our cooler moments would by no means approve, when quick emotions bring impulses that are followed without a pause for reasoning. Such a time had now come to Helen. Mr. Kit-ze was being robbed. She could see that plainly. The thief was the old *mutang*, and the object of her theft, it almost instantly flashed into Helen's mind, was the red *miriok*.

In truth, even as the intuition came to her, she saw the hideous little image in the woman's hand.

All Helen's energies were now bent toward a frustration of the old woman's design of carrying away the *miriok*. She, Helen, must recover it ere the *mutang* got off with it. For if the *miriok* disappeared, how could she ever carry out her good intentions for either Mr. Kit-ze or Choi-So? All would be frustrated. For would not Mr. Kit-ze be violently angry? and would he not at once charge the theft to Choi-So? And what might not happen? As to poor Choi-So, he would surely grow demented when he found that the image had gone beyond his reach—oh, she felt that he would!

In her sudden excitement, Helen never stopped for reasoning. Hence it did not occur to her that her testimony would exonerate Choi-So with Mr. Kit-ze, nor that, so far as the part relating to Choi-So was concerned the old *mutang* might be located and the stolen image recovered.

All that Helen then thought of was the recovery of the *miriok*. She must get it and at once. Even now the woman was slipping away with it. If she waited to arouse the others the old woman would be gone, for at the first sounds of alarm, she would speed away like a hunted animal up the bank. Helen knew the magic influence of money, especially of shining *yen*. Had not the old woman shown her greed for them during the afternoon? If the *miriok* could be recovered, it would surely be through the agency of the *yen*.

Both girls had lain down in the loose wrappers they

wore for comfort during a part of the day. In the pocket of hers Helen had her purse. Besides a few smaller silver pieces there were in it three *yen*.

She leaned quickly over Dorothy; she placed her arm under her neck and gently shook her, all the while whispering: "Get up quickly, dear, and come with me. Don't speak out, don't question; only come and be quick! quick!"

Fortunately, Dorothy was not hard to arouse when once she had been touched. Like some even heavy sleepers whom a vigorous call cannot awaken, the touch was like magic. In a second or so she was fully awake, and gazing at Helen in deep wonder but alert.

"It is the red *miriok*!" said Helen to Dorothy again in a whisper. "The old *mutang* has come and stolen it from Mr. Kit-ze. He does not know it, and there is no time to arouse him and the others. We must recover it. If we are quick we can overtake her before she gets away. Then this will accomplish the rest," she added, confidently holding up the purse.

The *mutang* had now sprung down from the side of the sampan into which she had crept, and was moving rapidly up the slight incline when Helen and Dorothy in turn reached the bank. She saw them almost instantly and, with a muffled cry, very much like the growl of an animal, increased her speed.

"Stop!" said Helen in low tones, and as persuasively as she could. "Stop! We only want to talk to you. We mean no harm."

But the old woman either did not understand them

or she would not stop. It was evidently the latter, for as much as she could, she quickened her pace. But swift as she was, Helen and Dorothy were even swifter. They were only a pace or two behind her as the top of the bank was reached.

It was not far from daylight. The signs of the approaching dawn had already begun to appear along the eastern sky. At the brow of the bluff and stretching away from the temple, was the village of rude mud huts, with now and then a more pretentious one showing in their midst. There was one principal street which ran along between the rows of huts. The *mutang* made for this with Helen and Dorothy close behind her.

"Stop!" entreated Helen again, and louder than before. "Oh, do stop! We mean no harm. We only want to talk to you." But the more earnestly she entreated, the more determined the old woman seemed to be to resist her, to escape from her.

Helen had now drawn near enough to lay hold of the old woman's clothing, but her grasp was violently shaken off, as the *mutang* sprang away again with renewed energy.

The two girls, intensely excited, stuck to the chase. All their thoughts were concentrated upon it; their one desire to overtake the old woman and to induce her, by offering *yen* in exchange, to return the *miriok*. Absorbed in these thoughts, this desire, they lost sight of all else, especially of how every moment that they were getting nearer and nearer to the woman they were going farther and farther away from the sampan.

"Oh," said Helen breathlessly, "we must overtake her! We must get her to give us the *miriok*. We

"'STOP!' ENTREATED HELEN!"

can't let her escape with it in this manner, for what then could we do about poor Choi-So and Mr. Kit-ze?"

"Yes," replied Dorothy, "we must get it back. I am like you, Helen, I can't bear to see the old woman get off with it. Oh, every time I think of that poor man Choi-So and his melancholy, pleading eyes, I feel that we must keep on, that we must overtake her and secure the image by some means!"

"Why," said Helen suddenly, "I have forgotten to tell her about the *yen* I have for her." Then she began to call, holding up her purse: "See! I have *yen* for you. Stop and let me tell you about it."

At last she had used the magic words. At sound of them, twice repeated, the *mutang* slackened her pace. Then she turned her head. Encouraged by these signs, Helen renewed her efforts.

They were now some distance into the village, and a half-mile or more from the sampan. The red glow of the coming morning had fully dyed the east. Already there were signs of stirring life in the huts about them. Then too, the noise of running feet and of Helen's loudly spoken words had attracted attention. One by one forms began to appear on the street. Soon there was quite a group in the neighborhood of the pursued and pursuers. By the time Helen had succeeded in gaining the old *mutang's* interest, there were many curious spectators surrounding them.

"What is all this commotion about?" asked one man as he approached. Then as he noted the *mutang* he stopped respectfully. The old woman had now paused in her running, and had turned toward Helen. "What were the words? Say them again."

Helen repeated them.

"Why are you running after me in this way? Why do you offer me *yen*?" she now asked angrily.

Helen told her as simply and as plainly as she could.

At this the old woman's eyes blazed more than ever. But she seemed to take a second thought, and asked cautiously, "How many *yen*?"

"Two," replied Helen, closely watching her face.

The old woman shook her head vigorously, then began to stamp. "Too little! too little!" she said. "Your head is under your arm to think I'd be such an idiot!"

Then she set off again.

"Three!" called Helen desperately, for she knew this was the limit of her resources so far as *yen* were concerned.

"No! no!" shouted the old woman. "Too little! too little! Five or none."

As the last sentence was uttered, she turned to see its effect on Helen, but as there was not the response she expected, she renewed her efforts to get beyond their reach.

"Oh, if I only had my purse too!" said Dorothy. "But I gave it to my brother yesterday just before we left Mr. Ko's."

In her despair Helen called after the old woman again and again to stop, to turn back with them to the sampan, promising her the *yen* she desired if only she would do so, and further assuring her that no harm should come to her, for Helen knew Mallard would

gladly supply the amount of *yen* she lacked. She would tell him about the *miriok*. She had been intending to do it the first favorable opportunity.

There was now quite a hubbub in the street, for in addition to Helen's calls and Dorothy's added entreaties, there were the shrill cries of defiance of the old *mutang* herself. People had come running from all directions, and their loudly voiced questions and exclamations added to the noise. Among others there came five runners, the court officers of a near-by *yangban* (gentleman), who was serving as magistrate.

When they saw the two girls they began to cry out something against the hated foreigners, and three of them at once took Helen and Dorothy into custody, while the other two hastened away to capture the *mutang*. They were too hardened to mind the old sorceress and her wiles. Moreover, the court was no respecter of persons.

Helen and Dorothy were now much frightened and, for the first time, began to realize what they had done in setting off on this mad chase after the old *mutang*.

Helen was the first to recover herself. "I guess," she said, "it won't be so dreadful. They won't dare hurt us. And soon our dear ones in the sampan will come to the rescue, for surely we can get them word. Anyhow, it won't be long ere they miss us, and they'll search the town over till they find us."

A young man, whom Helen declared looked more honest than any of the others, was soon engaged, in consideration of the offer of two of Helen's smaller silver

pieces, to carry the news of their predicament to the sampan. But alas for Helen's confidence! After securing the silver he had taken only about a dozen steps toward the river when, overcome by curiosity to see the thing out, he turned back.

The *mutang* had now been captured, but not until she had made such vigorous resistance that not only the clothing of the runners had been torn, but their faces also scratched.

In close company with the old *mutang*, and with the runners encircling them so that there could be no chance of escape, and a leering, hooting mob following them, the two girls were conducted along the street to the house of the *yangban*.

"Oh, Dorothy," said Helen, "this is dreadful!" and, in her pain and mortification, she sought to conceal as much of her face as she could with her hands.

"Yes," said Dorothy, on the verge of tears. "Oh, Helen, it would have been better, many times, to have let the *miriok* go."

"No," said Helen, "no!"

It was now sunrise, but far too early for the magistrate. They were informed that they must wait an hour or more.

Dorothy and Helen were finally permitted to enter the women's apartments. They afterward learned that it was through the overwhelming curiosity of the *yangban's* chief wife. At the entrance they were laid hold of by the serving-women and fairly dragged into the apartment. There they had a trying experience

which lasted nearly an hour. To them it seemed five times that length. Their clothing, their faces, and their hair in turn were inspected, and by each wife. They were bidden to take off their shoes, their wrappers, and other wearing apparel, and each wife in turn must try on each article. But the bulk of the curiosity was directed toward Helen's hair. It seemed that the women would never tire of handling it. They even wanted to cut it off, and but for Helen's heroic efforts, aided by Dorothy's quick ingenuity, would have succeeded.

At length they were summoned before the *yangban*, the wives, unable to restrain their curiosity, following them to the room, where they sat behind a screen.

The *yangban*, who was quite a young man, was lounging on his platform and smoking an immense cigar. He was dressed in a pea-green silk robe confined by a red girdle, and on each hand was a very showy paste-diamond ring.

He had ordered the outer door to be thrown open, and had allowed as many of the curious crowd to enter as could be accommodated within a certain space. Near him stood his interpreter, for he had early been informed that two of the accused were foreigners. After smoking awhile in silence, he commanded the offenders to be brought before him for the usual form of questions. He began with Helen. As she stepped a little apart from the others, and nearer to the magistrate, in her earnestness to tell him her story, she happened to raise her eyes for a moment and let them rest

upon the crowd gathered at her left. As she did so a little muffled cry escaped her. There, standing almost in the front line, and with his dark eyes fixed mournfully upon her, was Choi-So. How had he come there? Afterward she learned that he had not been far away from the sampan, and, sleeping very lightly because of the thoughts that disturbed him, had been attracted by the sound of running feet and by Helen's calls to the old woman. He had overtaken them just as they had been arrested and started to the *yangban's*. He had heard Helen try to tell one of the runners the cause of the trouble. He had gleaned just enough to set him on fire with interest and excitement. For an instant Choi-So's presence at the magistrate's court so disconcerted Helen that she could not remember the words she had been on the point of uttering. But soon more confidence returned, and she began bravely to tell her story.

The magistrate listened patiently, but he was evidently full of curiosity and deeply excited over the appearance of the two young girls. Though he had seen the white foreigners on the streets of Seoul, yet he had never before been brought in such contact with them. The fearless, earnest manner of both girls impressed him and had much to do with his decision.

The *mutang* should return the image, he declared. He had not asked to see it yet, and so was in no wise impressed by it. Helen and Dorothy had proved to be of such tremendous interest that all minor objects had been for the time obscured.

Yes, the *mutang* should return the image, and the *yen* that Helen had offered should go to himself.

This decision was barely rendered when there came a communication from his chief wife. He appeared to frown over it for a few moments, all the while smoking hard. Then he further announced, and in the most laconic manner, that Helen was to sacrifice her hair ere receiving the image.

A cry of dismay escaped Helen, while Dorothy, hot with indignation, began to pour out her protests, first to the magistrate, then to Helen.

"It can't be done! You can't think of such a thing! Don't! *Don't!*"

"Oh, yes," said Helen, who had now grown strangely quiet and calm. "It isn't such a dreadful sacrifice, dear. There are many far worse. I can endure it. My hair will grow out again. Oh, surely it is worth this when we remember what it means to get back the *miriok!*"

All the while she was speaking, though she was looking at Dorothy, yet Helen saw those mournful eyes that she knew were fixed upon her from the other side of the room.

"Take the scissors, Dorothy," she entreated. "I had forgotten until now that I had my folding ones here in the little case in my pocket. Oh, it will be so much better for you to do it, dear, for I couldn't bear any of those rude hands to touch me."

Dorothy took the scissors, but still making vigorous protest.

"Do, Dorothy, *do*, my dear," pleaded Helen.

With trembling hand Dorothy grasped the rich, shining braid. The scissors were raised; but ere the two gleaming blades could close on the glossy strand, a voice cried out authoritatively:

"*Stop! Stop!*"

Helen and Dorothy raised their eyes simultaneously. It was Mr. Kit-ze. He had pressed to the extreme limit of the line of spectators, and with his hat gone, his clothing in wild disorder, his eyes gleaming like two globes of fire, was gesticulating frantically to the magistrate.

CHAPTER XI

"ONE SOUL"

MR. KIT-ZE continued to gesticulate and to cry out to the magistrate, although those near-by sought to restrain him. He even tried to pass the barrier, but was each time pushed back by the guards.

The magistrate at first appeared not to notice him, but after a while, overcome by his curiosity, he turned his head and called to Mr. Kit-ze: "What do you want, fellow? I'll put you in the *cangue*[1] if you don't cease that noise."

"A word!" cried Mr. Kit-ze. "A word with you, O most high and exalted!"

The magistrate eyed him a moment nonchalantly. Then he said to a runner: "Bring him here."

Mr. Kit-ze approached and, falling upon his heels,

[1] A wooden collar worn by Korean offenders against the law.

prostrated himself three times before the *yangban*, touching his forehead to the floor each time.

As he arose, there fluttered from his fingers a strip of yellow ribbon, and those who were near to him saw stamped upon it in red a dragon with four wings and tongue extended.

"See!" said Mr. Kit-ze, as he held it before the magistrate. "See! O renowned son of a renowned father. O most exalted, I claim the promise."

A look of intelligence began to dawn in the magistrate's eye. He looked closely at the streamer of yellow ribbon. "Go on," he said to Mr. Kit-ze. "Go on, but keep your head above your shoulders, so as to make clear what you are trying to say."

"On a blessed day for your poor, miserable servant," began Mr. Kit-ze, "your exalted person came down the Han in a craft that went to grief in the rapids. Your polemen, losing their heads, deserted, and but for the assistance of the unworthy being now speaking to you and his poleman, there would have been neither craft nor cargo belonging to your exalted self to enter Seoul. You gave me *yen*, but you gave me this too," holding the ribbon nearer as he spoke, "and your most eloquent tongue, that always speaks straight, declared that if there was ever anything this miserable wretch desired of you that could be granted, it should be so."

"I remember," said the magistrate. "Go on."

"I ask you now, O renowned and honorable, to spare the hair of the daughter of him who is known

as the exalted teacher," and here Mr. Kit-ze turned toward Helen, who, ever since his sudden appearance, had been regarding him with a questioning if not puzzled wonder. How had he come there, and where were the others? Had he alone learned of their whereabouts, and how had it so happened?

"Take instead something of your wretched servant's," continued Mr. Kit-ze to the magistrate, "and leave undisturbed the beautiful strands that are a happiness to her whom they adorn and a joy in the eyes of those who love her."

"Oh, Mr. Kit-ze," said Helen softly, a great, warm flood of feeling sweeping over her heart as she comprehended what he had asked and noted the deep earnestness in his eyes as he turned them upon her, "don't mind about my hair; please don't. It won't be so dreadful to me to lose it. Don't get yourself into trouble for my sake," and now she laid her hand upon his shoulder in earnest pleading.

"I'll fear to suffer nothing if done for *you*, O daughter of the honorable teacher." And now his eyes were misty with feeling as their gaze lingered upon her.

"Come, is this all you want?" asked the magistrate impatiently and evidently resenting the conversation now going on between Helen and Mr. Kit-ze.

"Yes, it is all your wretched servant has to ask of you," replied Mr. Kit-ze. "O most honorable," he began to plead, "spare, I entreat you, the beautiful hair of her who is the daughter of the exalted teacher, and nothing more will I ask of you. Nothing!"

"But the *miriok*, Mr. Kit-ze, the *miriok?*" said Helen in an undertone and surprised that he had seemed to take no thought of it in his appeal to the magistrate. For he surely had heard enough of the proceedings to understand why she and Dorothy had been brought before the *yangban*.

"The *miriok?*" said Mr. Kit-ze softly and looking at her with eyes whose confidence touched her beyond expression. "He will give you the *miriok*. He has said it."

Then, as a sudden, strange expression came into his eyes, he glanced up quickly and straight toward the line of spectators. "There is another," he said, his lips moving nervously, "and I must!" He paused; then she heard him say again, "Oh, I must!"

Helen's heart leaped. Did he mean Mr. Choi-So? Had he seen him among the spectators? It was more than likely that he had, as the latter stood near to where Mr. Kit-ze was when he began to gesticulate to the magistrate.

"I can't see why your request shouldn't be granted," said the magistrate after a pause, and to Mr. Kit-ze; "especially as you have brought that at sight of which no gentleman could break his word," and he pointed to the streamer of yellow ribbon that Mr. Kit-ze still held. "I remember the service. Now let me hear the request again."

Mr. Kit-ze repeated it with all the eloquence that heart and tongue could bestow upon it.

"Take the image from the old woman and give it to

the young foreigner," said the magistrate, "and there will be no cutting of her hair," he added firmly.

As he uttered the last sentence, he threw his head up and glanced somewhat defiantly at the screen behind which he knew his wives were sitting. But the chief lady of his household was inexorable. Another message came to him, and quickly. She would renounce her desire for all of Helen' hair, but she must have some of it. A strand would now suffice her.

"No," said Mr. Kit-ze, "no!" and moved nearer to Helen as though to protect her. "It must not be!"

"I can spare a strand," said Helen soothingly to Mr. Kit-ze, "without it's ever showing where it has been cut."

Then she turned to Dorothy. "Help me undo the braids quickly, dear, and get a part of one of them. You will know where to cut. Get a good-sized piece," she added with a smile. "We must give her her curiosity's worth."

As the braids were loosened and the strands swept in shining waves over Helen's shoulders, falling below her waist, there was a chorus of quick exclamations, followed by prolonged murmurs of astonishment. Only Mr. Kit-ze groaned.

Urged by Helen, Dorothy severed the portion of hair, which was at once conveyed to the *yangban's* chief wife. They could hear the excited expressions that sounded from behind the screen.

Mr. Kit-ze looked miserable. He stood with folded hands mournfully regarding Helen. His eyes said

plainly, though his lips did not, "I tried to save it. If only you had let me!"

"Dear Mr. Kit-ze," said Helen, "how I do thank you for——"

But here she stopped, for the runner, who had at length succeeded, with the assistance of another, in getting the *miriok* from the old *mutang* was now offering it to her. He was also demanding for the magistrate the *yen* that had been mentioned.

Helen gave them to him, then reached for the *miriok*. But how her hand trembled! A pang too struck her heart. How different was the feeling to that with which she had thought she would receive the *miriok* if only she could succeed in recovering it! Though it had been stolen from Mr. Kit-ze, yet her chief thought when pursuing the old *mutang* had been of poor Choi-So, and of how frantic he would be should the *miriok* pass away from him. Now the *miriok* had been given back to her. She stood there with it in her hand. But there too stood Mr. Kit-ze, and she felt, if she did not see, his burning glance fixed upon the image in her clasp. How much he had dared for her! For it is considered a serious matter in Korea to interrupt a magistrate in the midst of his court. With what earnestness and eloquence had he pleaded for her hair, seeming to forget even the precious *miriok* in his desire to save to her that which he knew was pleasing to herself and a delight to her loved ones. He had even used his one claim to the favor of the magistrate in her behalf.

Yes, there stood Mr. Kit-ze with burning eyes regarding her, and there too, not more than ten paces away, was Choi-So. Only the moment before she had seen him, standing at almost the same spot and in almost the same position, his eyes riveted upon her every movement. How singularly quiet he had been! But it was, she felt, the quiet of concentrated emotion—emotion that might at any moment break forth.

Oh, what was she to do? A fervent prayer winged its way upward as she thought quickly, intently. Now of all times she must not make a mistake. The peace of a soul, maybe in the end the peace of two souls, was at stake. Suddenly her resolution was formed. She would give the *miriok* to Mr. Kit-ze, then, when they were released from the court and were away from all those inquisitive eyes, she would bravely plead with him to return it to Choi-So. She would see Choi-So too. She would entreat him to wait and to leave it to her.

"Mr. Kit-ze," she said, speaking slowly and trying to make each expression plain to him, "I saw the old woman when she robbed you. I called to Dorothy, for I knew I had not the time to awaken you and the others, and we chased her. Oh, how anxious we were to get the *miriok* for—for——"

But she could not tell him yet. Besides, the magistrate was through with them, and was even now instructing the runners to conduct them away.

As they turned to leave the room, Helen gently pressed the *miriok* into Mr. Kit-ze's hands. "Take

it," she said; "but later, when we get away from here, I must tell you something."

His fingers closed about it nervously, and he paused for a moment as though his emotion at receiving it again had overcome him. Then she heard him murmur, "Wrong, wrong. I must give it back," and, ere she could speak to him, he had moved hastily away.

Surprised, Helen, with a word to Dorothy, turned to follow him. After so bravely coming to the rescue, was he going to abandon them in that strange place to make their way back to the sampan alone?

"Stop, Mr. Kit-ze, stop!" entreated Helen.

"Oh, do wait for us, Mr. Kit-ze!" pleaded Dorothy.

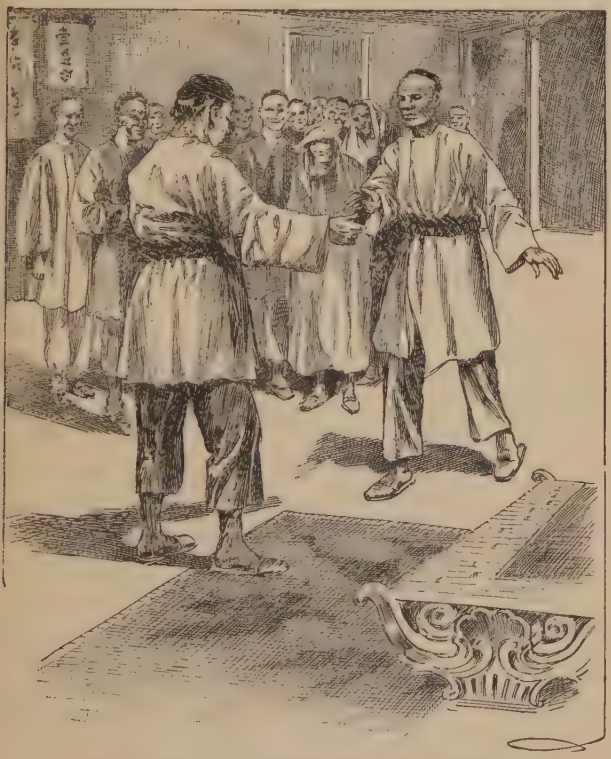
He paid no heed to them, only kept on; and now Helen, for the first time, realized whither he was going. It was straight toward Mr. Choi-So. Her heart almost stopped beating. What would happen? She must follow him and know. As she reached them, it was to see Mr. Kit-ze holding the image toward Choi-So, and to hear his tremulously uttered words, "Sorry. Sorry. It was wrong. She showed me."

Then he raised his head and added another word, but with almost pathetic entreaty, "Go!"

"No," said Helen quickly, "no," and reached out her hand to detain Mr. Choi-So, but too late.

With a muffled cry of joy that fell distinctly upon the ears of those around him, Mr. Choi-So grasped the image, dropped something into Mr. Kit-ze's hand and, turning, sprang away. He passed swiftly through the

crowd that opened at once to let him by, believing that he was running in search of his mind, as they expressed



"'SORRY. SORRY. IT WAS WRONG! SHE SHOWED ME.'"

it, and to their journey's end the inmates of the sampan did not see nor hear of him again.

"Oh, Mr. Kit-ze," said Helen, "I——"

But the sentence was never finished, for a joyous cry from Dorothy arrested her in the act of speaking the words, and, at the same time, she felt an arm slipped about her waist and heard a voice deep with emotion saying, "My daughter, this has been dreadful for you."

It was her father, and there too, was Mallard. How rejoiced they were to find her and Dorothy safe.

Soon the story of the search for them was told, and then Helen, for the first time, had light on a subject that even in the midst of far more engrossing things had caused her much wonder. This was as to how Mr. Kit-ze had found his way to the court-room without the others.

The old boatman had slept on until sunrise. The other inmates too had finished their morning naps, had performed their toilets, and were ready for breakfast ere the disappearance of the two girls was discovered. It was after repeated calls and numerous sarcastic remarks on Clarence's part had failed either to bring them forth or to win even a retort from them, that Mr. Reid had raised the curtain of their sleeping apartment for an examination. But still their absence had not caused alarm, for the first thought was that they might be walking on the bank near by. However, as a search in that direction failed to discover them, a well defined fear soon spread. In a short time it became evident that they had either wandered away and become lost or had been abducted.

It was quickly arranged that Mr. Reid, Mr. Kit-ze, and Mallard should set off in search for them, while

Mr. Wilburn, Clarence, and Joyce remained to take care of the sampan.

In the town they soon heard of the arrest ; but as there were two magistrates, there were, of course, two trails to follow, as no one they met seemed to know before which one the girls had been carried. In the eagerness of inquiry, Mr. Kit-ze became separated from Mr. Reid and Mallard and, while they went on the wrong trail at first, he went on the right one, arriving almost as soon as the court had begun.

There was a joyful reunion at the sampan. Only Mr. Kit-ze looked sad. Helen watched for the first opportunity to speak to him when alone and said : "Oh, Mr. Kit-ze, that was a good, brave thing you did. How glad it has made me !"

The gloomy look began to leave his face. He turned toward her, a joy awakening in his eyes. "I did it," he said, "because you told me."

"I?" asked Helen astonished. "Oh, no, Mr. Kit-ze, I never told you."

"Not with lips, but with eyes," declared Mr. Kit-ze. "Oh, when you looked at me so, I knew I must. I felt it here," laying his hand with a pathetic movement on his heart. "And when you talked to me, daughter of the most honorable teacher, oh, it was like light coming, coming, that is almost here."

"But how did you know that I knew about the *miriok?*" she asked, now more astonished than ever.

"I heard him. The day on the bluff. Oh, how frightened poor Kit-ze, and wretched, wretched !"

So he had heard Choi-So tell the story, and though he had hotly protested against his accompanying them as poleman, all the time vigorously declaring to himself that he would never give up the *miriok*, yet the seeds of better things had taken root in his heart, were even then beginning to push their tender shoots upward. And how Helen's deep interest, her kindness to him, her evident concern, above all, the sweet, earnest words she had spoken—how these had brought just the nourishment to make the seed grow! The hand that no harsh force of compulsion could ever have made give up the idol to which it clung had brought it tremblingly to the feet of love, won by its all-conquering power.

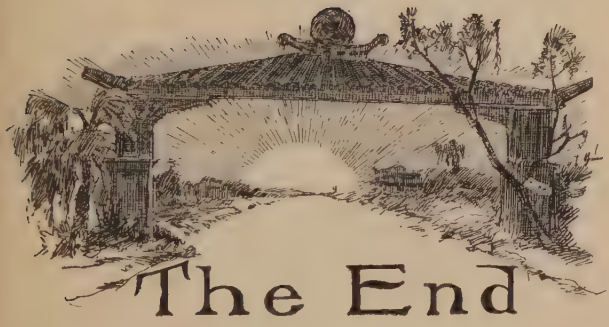
They turned back from the old temple above Yo-Ju after thoroughly exploring it. They also spent a day in Yo-Ju, where Mr. Kit-ze fortunately found a poleman whom he knew and in whom he had confidence. They stopped at Mr. Ko's long enough to pick up Mr. Chefoo, whom they found well on the road to recovery, and to leave with their old friend some remembrances brought from Yo-Ju.

What a joy it was to Helen, on the homeward journey, to watch Mr. Kit-ze coming more and more into the light.

It was one afternoon, just as they were passing along beneath the beautifully verdured bluffs that indicate the nearness of the mountain range which encircles Seoul, that Dorothy, slipping her arm with warm pressure about Helen's waist, laid a book across Helen's knee with a passage marked.

After a moment, Helen looked up, her eyes suffused with tears, for this is what she had read :

Perchance in heaven, some day, to me
Some blessed saint will come and say :
"All hail, beloved, but for thee
My soul to death had fallen a prey";
Then oh, what rapture in the thought
One soul to glory to have brought.



The End

SHAN FOLK LORE STORIES

FROM THE

HILL AND WATER COUNTRY

BY

WILLIAM C. GRIGGS, M. D.

TO MY FRIEND

F. R. Gushing, D. D., F. R. A. S.

Principal of the American Baptist College, Rangoon, and Senior Shan Missionary, the greatest authority upon Shan literature, and the translator of the Bible into that language, this little book is dedicated by

THE AUTHOR

INTRODUCTION

The following stories have been taken from the great mass of unwritten lore that is to the black-eyed, brown-skinned boys and girls of the Shan mountain country of Burma what "Jack the Giant Killer" and "Cinderella" are to our own children.

The old saw as to the songs and laws of a country may or may not be true. I feel confident, however, that stories such as these, being as they are purely native, with as little admixture of Western ideas as it was possible to give them in dressing them in their garment of English words, will give a better insight into what the native of Burma really is, his modes of thought and ways of looking at and measuring things, than a treatise thrice as long and representing infinitely more literary merit than will be found in these little tales; and at the same time I hope they will be found to the average reader, at least, more interesting.

It may, perhaps, be not out of place to say a little of the "*hpeas*" who appear so frequently in these stories. The *hpea* is the Burman *nat*, and is "a being superior to men and inferior to Brahmas, and having its dwelling in one of the six celestial regions" (Doctor Cushing's "Shan-English Dictionary"). They are universally worshiped by the inhabitants of Burma.

If a man has fever, the best thing to do is to "*ling hpea*," that is, to feed the spirits, and the sufferer therefore offers rice, betel-nut, painted sticks, etc. Some kinds of *hpeas* live in the sacred banyan trees, and frequently have I seen men, after a long day's march in the jungle, sit shivering on the ground when within an arm's length lay good dry fire-wood. It had fallen, however, from a tree in which lived a *hpea*, and not a man would dare touch it. Big combs of honey may be in the nests of the wild bees, but it is safe from the hungry traveler if it is sheltered by such a tree. Some watch over wells, tanks, and lakes, and it is notorious throughout the Southern Shan States, that a promising young American missionary, who was drowned while shooting, met his death by being dragged to the bottom of the lake by the guardian spirit, who had become incensed at him for killing a water-fowl on his domains.

In Shan folk-lore the hero does not "marry and live happy ever after," but he becomes the king of the country.

American Baptist Shan Mission House,
Bhamo, Burma, 1902.

CONTENTS

A Laung Khit 9

How Boh Han Me Got his Title 19

The Two Chinamen 32

The Story of the Princess Nang Kam Ung 45

How the Hare Deceived the Tiger 57

The Story of the Tortoise 66

The Sparrow's Wonderful Brood 78

How the World was Created 85

How the King of Pagan Caught the Thief 92

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

"Each year at the Feast of Lights . . . she prayed"..... 10

"The man standing at the top of the tree was the long-lost brother"..... 37

"Again the cunning hare deceived the tiger"..... 63

"'I am nothing but a tortoise swimming in the lake'"..... 67

"On his way he saw what seemed to be a bed of flowers"... 79

FOLK LORE STORIES

"A LAUNG KHIT."[1]

ONCE upon a time there was a woman who lived in the State of Lai Hka. She was a very pious woman and always gave the best rice and *puc* to the priests as they walked, rice *chattie* in hand, through the city in the early morning. Every year when the girls and boys went to the river and filled their chatties with water to throw over the pagodas and idols to insure a good rainy season and abundant crops, she always had the largest bucket of the clearest water and threw it higher than anybody else. She carried the sweetest flowers to the *zayat* every evening, and on worship days took rice in the prettiest of cups made of banana leaves and offered to the Gautamas in the idol-house.

But she was not happy. When her neighbors went to the pagodas they had their little ones tied upon their backs or running at their sides, but she had no child whom she could take with her, none to whom she could tell stories of the great Lord Sa Kyah who rules over the spirits in the *hpeą* country, and so she was sad. She was getting old too, and often envied the women

[1] "'A Laung,' one who is progressing toward a divine state; an incipient deity."—*Cushing's "Shan Dictionary," p. 586.*

who lived near who had bright boys to run errands and girls to help in the house. Each year at the Feast of Lights, when she sent her little candle floating down the river, she prayed for a child, but in vain.

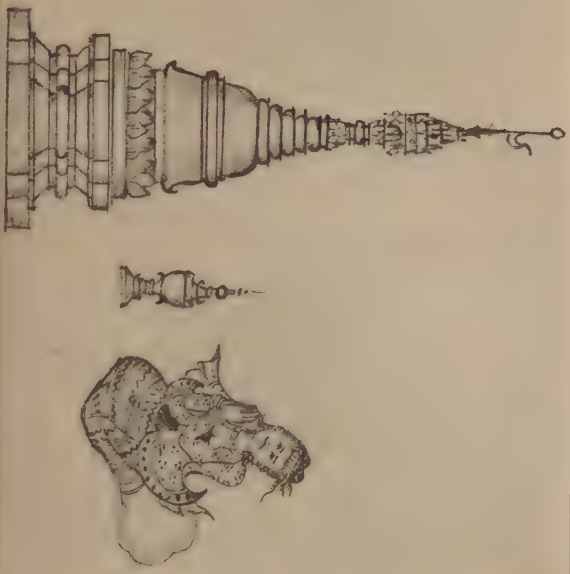
At last she made a pilgrimage to a pagoda where folks said was a *parah* who would give anything that was asked of him. Bright and early she set out, and on her head as an offering she carried an image of a tiger and one of a man, and when she arrived at the pagoda she offered the images and prayed for a son.

While she was praying at the pagoda, Lord Sa Kyah heard her, took pity on her, and promised her a son. But, alas! when he was born, to his mother's great sorrow, instead of being the beautiful boy she hoped for he was nothing but a frog.

Lord Sa Kyah in order to comfort her, however, told her that her son was really a great *hpea*, and that after one year and seven months he would change into the most handsome man in all the hill and water country.

All the women scoffed and made fun of the poor mother, and all through the village she was called Myeh Khit, or "Frog's Mother," but she bore their jeers in silence and never reviled in return.

Now the king of the country had seven daughters. All were married except one, and one day Myeh Khit went to him to ask for this daughter in marriage for her son. The king was of course very angry that she should ask that his only remaining daughter should marry a frog, but he spoke deceitfully, called his daughter and asked her if she would be willing to ac-



BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY

cept a frog for a husband. Like a dutiful daughter she told him that she would "follow his words" and do as he wished, as she had no will apart from his.

The king then called the woman and said: "O woman, I will give my only remaining daughter to your son, but I make one stipulation. You must build a road, paved and properly built, from the market-place to my palace; the sides must be decorated with painted bamboos, and the work must be done within seven days or you shall die. Now go, and prepare for the work, and at the end of the seven days I will make ready the marriage feast for my daughter or order the executioner to take off your head."

In great distress Myeh Khit returned to her home and sat down on the floor of her house and wept. All day long she bewailed her hopeless condition. In vain her son asked her the cause of her sorrow. Afraid of grieving him she would not tell him; but at last when six out of the seven days had passed, and knowing the fate that awaited her on the morrow, she told him how she had gone to the king with her request, and the time being almost expired, that she must make ready to die on the morrow.

"The executioner's sword has already been sharpened, my son," she said, "and to-day in bazaar they were talking of it, and promising to meet one another at the palace to-morrow when the sun should be overhead."

As a last resource she made ready food and sweetmeats. She took paddy and placed it over the fire till

the heat broke the husks and the pure white grains appeared. These she mixed with the whitest of sugar, and as she was too poor to own plates, she went into the jungle to where the new bamboo was bursting through its green prison, and taking the broad coverings of the new leaves she fashioned them into dishes and offered them with many prayers for help to Lord Sa Kyah.

"Our lord knoweth that my son can do nothing," she cried. "He has not even hands to help, and what can our lord's slave do to avoid the great trouble to which I have arrived?"

That night in the lovely *hpea* country the mighty Lord Sa Kyah reclined on his golden throne of state. By and by the velvet mat became so hot that he could sit upon it no longer, and looking down he saw, squatting before him on the floor, a frog.

"O our lord," said the frog, "I come to remind our lord that he is his slave's father. My mother, our lord's slave, has arrived at great sorrow, and unless our lord pities us and takes compassion on our lord's slave, she will arrive at destruction to-morrow. Graciously do this act of kindness, O chief of all the *hpeas*."

Lord Sa Kyah took pity on his son and promised to help him. The four strongest spirits in his kingdom were four *hpeas*. They were twins and the name of the first two was Nan Ta Re and that of the second Hte Sa Kyung. These powerful spirits he ordered to complete the road during the night.

The next morning when the king arose he looked

forth from his palace and a most wonderful sight met his gaze. He rubbed his eyes, for he believed they deceived him. He pinched himself to see whether he was really awake or whether he was dreaming. For a wonderful thing had happened during the night, so wonderful, in fact, that one cannot be surprised that he thought it unreal.

From the bazaar to the very gate of the palace was a broad, smooth road. On each side were brick walls covered with the whitest of cement, and decorated with the heads of lions, and two large griffins, built of brick and covered also with cement, guarded the entrance. They were more than twelve cubits high ; their mouths were wide open and showed their terrible fangs, and their eyes looked upon the king with a stony glare. The road was paved with blocks of stone cut as smooth and laid as true as the cells of a honeycomb. There was one road for men, one for oxen, and yet another for horses. *Zayats* had been built here and there so that travelers aweary could rest and be thankful, and over all was a wide canopy of white cloth that extended entirely from end to end and from side to side to protect the king from the sun when he should move along the road to observe its wonders more closely.

In utter amazement he beat the gong that hung ready to his side with such vigor that *amats*, soldiers, attendants, and the people from the city, came rushing out of their houses to the palace gates expecting at least that the neighboring prince with whom they had long been at war had taken the city by surprise ; but they, like

the king, stood transfixed and speechless with wonder when they saw the road with its carvings and *zayats* and the canopy with the golden border spread above all.

The king called Myeh Khit. She came, and hidden in her turban was her son. The king had thought to punish this presumptuous woman by giving her an impossible task to do with a penalty that put her beyond the power of offending again, and was of course angry and disappointed that his scheme had been unsuccessful; but the occurrence had become the common talk of the market-place, and so he was obliged to carry out his part of the bargain, although it had gone contrary to his expectation and desires. So, much against his will, he called his daughter and gave an order that for seven days there was to be a feast in honor of the marriage of the princess.

But when the rejoicings of the people were finished, Khit was not given permission to live in his father's palace but was sent with his wife and mother to live in the old house where he had been born.

Six days after the marriage there was a feast at the pagoda, and the six daughters of the king went in state.

They rode upon royal elephants; dancers danced before them; the golden umbrellas protected them from the sun; and everybody fell upon their knees and clasped their hands as the august personages went along. Their retinue filled the street when they stopped at the little house where their sister lived.

"O sister," they called, "are you coming to the

feast?" but the poor girl in great shame told them she could not come, and when they had gone, she sat on the floor with her face in her hands and gave way to her grief.

While she was sobbing, her husband approached and told her not to be sorrowful. "My father is the great Lord Sa Kyah," said he, "and he will give me anything I ask, so do not say, 'I am ashamed to go, as I have only a frog for a husband.' You shall yet see your proud father and unkind sisters bowing before you and offering you presents as they offer to gods."

Seeing how distressed the poor girl really was, the Lord Sa Kyah took pity on them and descended to earth. He brought with him wonderful white clothes such as the *hpeas* wear. They were brighter than the stars that shoot across the sky at night, or the lightning that flashes over the heavens during the hot season. He also gave them a magic stone, which if placed under their tongues, would enable them to fly wherever they wished.

The next morning was the last day of the feast when the boat races would be rowed, when the horses of the king and his chief *amats* would race for prizes, when the best jugglers would show their most wonderful tricks, and the best dancers would dance under the booths. In the midst of the fun and excitement a great shout rent the air: "The mighty Lord Sa Kyah is descending!" and right in the middle of the feasting there was a flash of brilliant light and two wonderful beings alighted. They were clothed in dazzling white,

and flew swifter than when a kingfisher darts from a tree toward its prey in the water.

Every one came crowding around as near as they dared, and upon their knees offered presents of food to the wonderful beings.

First and foremost came the princesses, who bowed till their foreheads touched the dust; they lifted their clasped hands over their heads and turned away their faces while they offered the sweetest and most savory food to the visitors. But it was noticed that although the spirits ate the food offered by the *amats* and common people, they would not eat that given by the princesses, but wrapped it up and placed it on one side.

The next day the princesses came to their sister's house and derided her. "O wife of an animal," they cried, "you would not come to the feast, and so you lost the chance of seeing the mighty Lord Sa Kyah descend from the *hpea* country," and then they told of the wonderful sight, and again made fun of their unfortunate sister.

Khit's wife smiled at them and then she said: "It is you who are unfortunate, not I. My husband is not the ugly animal you think him to be, but is a great and powerful *hpea*. It was not the Lord Sa Kyah who descended yesterday, but his son, my husband, and myself, and to prove my words, whose are these?" and she produced the very bundles of food that her sisters had offered the day before to the supposed ruler of all spirits.

The sisters were surprised to see that she had the

food there, but they laughed her to scorn when she told them of her husband.

In order that his son should become mighty and famous, the Lord Sa Kyah sent one of his attendants to the king, and caused him to give an order to his children that they should have a boat race. The one who reached the winning post first and carried away the flag on its rattan pole was to be king in his room, and the one who came in last was to be slave to the fortunate one.

There were great preparations among the servants of the six princesses, and many wagers were made as to who would be successful, but none wished to wager as to who would come in last, as all knew it would be the youngest sister.

"She has no boat," said they, "and has no servants to make one, or money to buy one. Even if she had, what could she do? Her husband has no hands, how could he row against and defeat the swift boatmen who have been called by the princesses?"

The king gave seven days in which his daughters were to prepare for the race, and during that time the shouting of the various crews as they practised on the lake was heard from early morning till the sun dropped behind the mountains, but only six boats were seen.

The race was to take place on a lake at the outskirts of the city, and on the morning of the seventh day, when the six princesses took their stations they were surprised to see that there was a seventh boat there, but they did not know that it was a magic boat sent by the

Lord Sa Kyah from the *hpea* country, and that the sixteen rowers were not men, but *hpeas*.

The course was over a thousand cubits to a post, around it, and return, and so fast did the magic boat glide through the water that it had covered the entire distance and the captain had laid the flag at the king's feet before any of the other boats had reached the first pole that showed half the distance.

But something even more wonderful than that had taken place. During the race, the time set apart during which the son of Myeh Khit was to have the form of a frog had expired, and, lo! he was now the most handsome man in all the hill and water country. He had a crown of gold upon his head, and the magic white clothes such as only *hpeas* wear were on his person. His wife was clothed in as beautiful a manner, and the king, at last seeing the mistake he had made in treating him so badly, knelt on the shore and asked: "Which lord is the son of his slave?" by which he meant, which of the lords was the one to whom he had given his daughter.

But the Lord Khit, as he was now called, did not take a mean revenge on his unkind brothers and sisters, and when they came on their knees begging for their lives, and asking the privilege of being his slaves, he took compassion on them, and instead of ordering them to immediate execution, made them his *amats*.

This is why the Shans who live in the hill and water country worship Sau Maha Khit.

HOW BOH HAN ME GOT HIS TITLE.

BOH HAN ME was one of the greatest generals who ever lived in the hill and water country. Just what his original name was nobody knows now, but this story tells how he gained his title.

One day he went into the jungle with his wife and his two children to gather *nau*, which is a kind of *puc* made from the young bamboo shoots. They were very successful in getting it, and were just on the point of going home with their loads, when right before them appeared a large black bear. The bear opened wide his mouth and roared, showing his immense white teeth and great throat, and came ambling toward them growling all the while in the fiercest kind of way.

Now as soon as the man saw the bear he just threw away all the *nau* that he had in his hands and ran for his life, calling on his wife to do the same. The two children followed their father and left their mother to get out of her trouble as best she could. She, however, was as brave as her husband was cowardly, and instead of running away, she took a handful of the longest of the shoots and thrust them down the open throat of the bear and killed him. She then took the short sword that they had brought from home to cut the shoots, and with it she skinned the bear, cut him up, and made the skin into a sack in which to carry the meat.

Meanwhile her cowardly husband did not stop running till he reached the city in which he lived, and then he told all his neighbors how he had been in the jungle and a great bear had attacked them; how he had fought bravely for a long while, but at last it had killed his wife and eaten her. The neighbors were very sorry for him, but advised him to get home and fasten all the doors and windows before the spirit of his wife would have time to get in, for they said, seeing that she was killed when he was with her, her ghost would without doubt try and gain admittance to the house and haunt it. Once in, it would be very difficult to get her out.

The man, more frightened than ever, ran home as fast as he could and called his children to bring all the rice that was already cooked into the house, and then they fastened up the two doors and the one window with bamboos and rattan. There was to be a feast in the city that night, and the two children wanted to go and see the fun, but their father was in such a fright that he would not give them permission to go, or even to look out through the holes in the sides of the house where the bamboo matting had come unfastened and bulged away from the posts.

By this time the sun had set and it was just getting dark, and the man, tired with the hunt in the jungle and the excitement after, was just going to sleep when he heard a voice that he recognized as his wife's calling to be let in.

"Husband, *oie!*" it called, "open the door and let me in. I am very tired and hungry, and want rice and

sleep. Get up quickly. Why have you fastened up the window and doors with bamboos and rattan? There are no bad men around; any one would think you were afraid thieves were coming to-night."

The man was frightened almost to death when he heard his wife's voice, for he felt sure it was her ghost coming to haunt him, so he called out:

"Ghost of my wife, *oie!* I will not let you in. If I did I would never be able to get you out again. You want to haunt this house. I will not let you in. Go away, go away!"

In vain the woman told him that she was indeed his wife, that she was not a ghost at all, but had killed the bear and had his skin on her back with the meat in it, and begged to be let in; the man would not believe her and so she had to wait outside. All night long she called and begged her husband to let her in, but in vain. When the sun had risen, however, he felt a little braver, and so he put his head out through the thatch, and saw that it really was his wife and not her ghost. With great joy he ran down, opened the door, and let her in, but when his wife told him how she had killed the bear, he again became frightened.

"We have arrived at great trouble," said he. "When the people hear that you have killed a bear, they will most surely kill you. What shall we do to escape and be freed from the impending punishment?"

But his wife was a clever woman, and when the neighbors came in to ask how it was that she had not been killed, she told a wonderful story, how through

the bravery of her husband she had been saved; that he had seen the bear, and by his bravery, that was so great it was good to marvel at, it had been driven off. The neighbors were very pleased that so brave a man lived in their quarter, and he became famous, people calling him Gon Han Me, or "the man who saw the bear."

Gon Han Me was very proud of his title, as many other vain people have been proud of titles they never earned, but it came near costing him his life, and this was the way it led him into great danger. One day a large cobra fell into the well that was in the yard before the chief door of the king's palace, and everybody was afraid to draw water because of it. When the *amats* told the king that a cobra was in the well, he gave orders that it was to be taken out, but nobody was brave enough to go down the well and kill the snake. The chief *amat* was in great distress. He feared the king would deprive him of his office if the snake were not killed immediately. He was not brave enough to descend himself, and money, promises, and threats were of no avail to induce any one else to go. Everybody declined to take the risk, and said: "Of what use is money, or horses, or buffaloes, to a man bitten by a cobra? Will that free him from death? Nay, go yourself."

The poor *amat* was at his wits' end, when at last one of the attendants told the king that in the quarter of the city where his sister lived, was a man so brave that he was called Gon Han Me, and said he: "If a man is

brave enough to see a bear in the jungle and not be afraid, surely he will dare go down the well and kill the cobra."

The king was much pleased with the attendant for showing a way out of the difficulty. "He surely is the man we want," said he; "go and call him immediately to come and destroy the snake."

The attendant of the king came to Gon Han Me and said: "Brother, *oie!* the king has heard that you are a very brave man, so brave, in fact, that your neighbors all talk of you and you have arrived at the rank of being called 'Gon Han Me.' Now in the royal well there is a snake, a cobra, which as you know is called the worst snake that lives. It is a very wicked snake and everybody has arrived at great trouble because of it. Nobody dares draw water there, and the king has given orders that it is to be killed. However, no one at the palace is brave enough to descend the well and kill the snake, but when his majesty heard of your great bravery, he sent me to order you to come immediately, descend the well, and kill the cobra. He will give you great rewards, and besides will make you a *boh* (officer) in the royal army."

When Gon Han Me heard this he was in great distress and called his wife. "Wife, *oie!*" he said; "this unlucky name will certainly be the cause of my death. It will truly kill me. The king has called me to descend the royal well and kill a wicked snake that is frightening everybody in the palace. I am not brave enough to go. If I do not go, the king will have me

executed. I shall be killed whichever I do. If I go the snake will kill me, if I do not go the king will kill me. I shall arrive at destruction, and all because of this miserable name."

The wife pondered awhile and then advised her husband to get dressed in his best clothes and go to the palace, look down the well to see what it was like, then make some excuse to come back home and she would tell him what next to do.

The man was soon dressed in his best clothes, and was already going down the steps of the house when his wife called out that he had left his *hsan* behind him. Now when the Shans go into the jungle, or on a journey, they carry with them a rice-bag, or *hsan*. This is a long narrow bag, more like a footless hose than anything else, and when filled with rice it is worn around the waist, where it looks like a big snake coiled around. Now Gon Han Me was very proud of his rice-bag, for instead of being made of plain white cloth, as is the custom, it was embroidered all over with different colored wools, and was so long that it went around his waist several times.

He was so excited and terrified that when he reached the well he did not notice that one end had been unfastened and was dragging on the ground, and as he went to the well to look over, it caught around his legs, overbalanced him, and he went head first into the well with a tremendous splash. The next instant the snake lifting its head darted at him, and all that the men above, who were waiting with breathless interest to dis-

cover how the battle would end, could hear, was an infinite amount of splashing, yells, and hissing. Gon Han Me never knew how it was, but in the fall his *hsan* became twisted around the neck of the snake, and in a few minutes it was choked to death.

The man for a while could hardly believe that the snake was really dead. It seemed too good to be true, but he came to the conclusion that his *kam*[1] was good, and he would yet be a great and famous man. He therefore assumed a heroic air, and at the top of his voice called to the men at the mouth of the well :

"Brethren, *oie!* I have killed the snake and thus freed you from the great danger from which you were suffering. I will now throw up the end of this long rice-bag. Do you catch it and pull me and the dead snake up to dry ground." He thereupon threw up the end of the embroidered *hsan*, the men caught it, and the next minute he appeared with the dead snake in his hand.

The king was very pleased with Gon Han Me for his brave act. He gave him great rewards as he had promised, and also gave order that in future he should be known by the name of "Boh Han Me," or "the officer who saw the bear."

Some time after this there was war between the king and the ruler of the next province. There was a great council called and it was unanimously agreed that as Boh Han Me was the bravest man in the country, he should be appointed as commander-in-chief.

[1] *Kam*, luck, or fate.

When the message came to his house, however, it caused him great distress, for as he told his wife, he did not want to be killed in the least; he did not wish to run the risk of being killed or even hurt. Besides he had never been on horseback in his life. He had a buffalo that ploughed his fields, and it is true that occasionally, tired with the day's work, he had ridden home on its back when the sun sank into the west, but he was sure that if he got on the back of a horse it would immediately divine that he was ignorant of the art of riding, did not *mau* as he said, and he would be thrown to the ground and hurt, killed maybe. Who could tell?

Again his clever wife came to the rescue. "You must go to the fight whether you want to or not," said she. "The king has given orders and he must be obeyed. To disobey the king is more dangerous than seeing a bear or even fighting a snake, so go you must. As to riding, that is easily managed. Bring your pony here and I will show you how to ride without danger."

On the never-to-be-forgotten day when the whole family went into the jungle to gather *nau*, they were very poor, but since the fight with the snake in the well, they had become rich, and so now the *boh* had servants to do his bidding, and he therefore called one of them to saddle his pony and bring it to the door of his house. This was soon done. He took his seat, and then his wife took long pieces of rawhide and fastened his legs, from ankle to knee, on both sides to the stirrups and girths. She knotted them securely so that there would

be no chance of his falling off his steed. He was very pleased that he had such a clever wife, who could help him out of every trouble into which he might fall, and rode away well pleased with himself, and soon reached the place where the soldiers were assembled awaiting his appearance before beginning the march.

To have seen him nobody would have thought that he was frightened sick. He sat up bravely, and you would have thought that he was the best horseman in all the hill and water country, but all the time he was turning over in his mind the advice given by his wife when they talked it over the night before. This was what she said to him : " Now, when you get to the soldiers, see them start off. Give all the orders in a very loud, pompous tone. Talk high, and and they will think you *man* very much (are very clever). Then you can easily find some excuse to get to the rear, and you must stay there till the fighting is all finished."

There was one party to this arrangement, however, that they had both failed to take into account when making their plans, and that was the pony. They neither remembered that there was a possibility of the pony taking it into his head to carry his master where the latter did not want to go, but that was just what happened, for, when the pony saw all the other horses and the men marching off, he too commenced to move forward. He was a fine big pony and was accustomed to head processions, not to come at the tail end, and so he started off of his own accord. Now we have said that his rider had never been on horseback before, but had

often ridden his buffalo from the paddy field when the day's work of ploughing was over. When a man on a buffalo wishes to stop, he jerks the rope that is fastened to the animal's nose, and obedient to the signal, it stops. So, when the *boh* found his steed forging ahead a little faster than suited him, he jerked the reins, expecting the pony to stop, but to his consternation, he found it go all the faster. He jerked harder, the pony broke into a quick trot. He jerked again, the pony began to gallop. He was now thoroughly frightened and called out at the top of his voice, but this only frightened the pony more and it began to gallop just as fast as ever it could, and worse than all, it headed straight for the enemies' soldiers, whom he could see in the distance getting ready to receive him. He cursed his wife with all his heart. If he could only fall off! She had taken too good precautions against that. He pulled and tugged, but the rawhide was strong; the knots were too tight; and every minute brought him nearer to his enemies. He could hear the shouts of his friends in the distance getting fainter and fainter as the distance increased, calling him to come back. How he wished he could! He swayed from side to side, first on one flank then on the other. The pony now had its head down between its knees, the bit between its teeth, and was tearing along like the wind. It would be hard to say which was the more frightened, the horse or its rider; each frightened the other. But there was a lower depth yet to be reached. In jumping over a hole the saddle slipped to the side, the next instant away it

went, turned, and saddle, rider, and all slipped clear around, and Boh Han Me found himself still securely lashed to the saddle, squarely under his horse instead of on it.

Meanwhile in the camp of the enemy a council of war was being held. "Can any one tell me," asked the king, "who commands our foes?"

"Our lord," said one of the *amats*, "it is a man who has been picked out of the whole army, and is the bravest man who ever drew a sword. He is called Boh Han Me because he conquered a great fierce bear in the jungle. He also went down a well in the royal palace and killed the largest and fiercest snake ever seen in all the hill and water country."

The king was much disquieted when he heard of the prowess of this man, and was pondering whether it would not be better to fight with silver than steel, and offer a great reward to any man in the enemies' camp who would bring to him the head of this doughty soldier, when he heard a great shout. He sprang to the tent door and looked anxiously out. All eyes were bent in one direction and a look of intense wonder, not unmixed with fear, sat on each face. The king naturally expected to see the whole army of the enemy approaching in overwhelming numbers, but he shared the wonder of his soldiers when he saw, not an army, but one single man dashing toward him. The next instant the rider disappeared entirely, but the horse came on faster than before. Next instant there was the rider again, arms tossing in the air, hair streaming behind,

only to disappear the following moment in the same mysterious way.

The face of the king blanched with terror as he asked in a whisper, "Who is this man?"

A hundred voices cried: "It is Boh Han Me, the bravest man alive! He has some charm that makes him invisible whenever he wishes, and he cannot be hurt by sword or arrow."

Nothing spreads so quickly as a panic, and almost before the king was aware of it, he was carried away in the fierce rush to escape. His men were blind with fear; they threw away their arms; men and officers fled for their lives, their only thought to flee from that horse and its terrible rider who disappeared and reappeared in such an awful fashion, and in a few minutes the field was deserted and the whole army in full retreat.

The horse by this time was exhausted. It stumbled, but regained its feet only to fall again immediately. It made another effort to struggle to its feet, but this time unsuccessfully, and then lay still on its side, its flanks heaving and its breath coming and going in quick sobs. Very cautiously Boh Han Me drew a knife and slowly cut one knot. The horse did not stir. Another followed, and soon one leg was freed. This made the task easier, and soon both legs were cut from their bonds and he sprang to his feet, bruised and sore, it is true, but no bones broken, and only too glad to be on solid earth again, and he vowed he would never from that day forth ever get on anything that moved faster than a buffalo.

What the king said when he reached the place where the foes had encamped may be imagined. He declared that a man as brave as his general had never lived in any age or country. For one man to charge a whole army, and, what was more, drive it off too, was a thing good to marvel at, and Boh Han Me did the wisest thing he ever did in his life, he just held his peace. When they had gathered together the spoil they returned home with the hero by the side of the king. The latter gave him a grand palace with gold, silver, oxen, buffaloes, elephants, and slaves in abundance, and also the rank of Boh Hoh Sök, which is the highest rank of general in the army, and means, "head of all the troops." The happy man lived many, many years, but he kept his promise, and whenever he wished to travel he rode upon an elephant and never again as long as he lived got upon the back of a horse.

THE TWO CHINAMEN.

AGES ago, when this world was new, having been created but a short while, two Chinese boys left their native country and started out on their travels to discover things new and strange. After wandering for many days they came to the hill and water country where the Shans live. Here they found a monastery, where lived very wise and learned priests, who instructed them in many ways.

They lived here some time and won the esteem of the head priest to such an extent that he showed them a magic sword and bow that had lain in the monastery many years waiting for somebody to carry away. The law was that the man who could bend the bow or could draw the sword from its sheath should keep it.

The elder brother went to the sword and tried to draw it. He pulled, he tugged, he strained, till the sweat ran down his face, but in vain. He could not draw it out one inch.

Seeing the ill success of his elder brother, the younger thought it impossible for him to draw the magic sword, but at his brother's command he took the handle in his hand and pulled with all his might. To everybody's surprise out came the magic sword, and the Chinaman walked away in triumph.

The elder brother now made up his mind that if he

could not get the sword he would try for the bow, and he might have more success with that, so he exerted all his strength, and slowly, slowly bent it, till the cord was taut and the bow all ready to shoot.

The people of the city were amazed that the two brothers should have such strength and good luck, and many envious eyes followed them as they again set out on their journey, carrying their trophies with them.

They traveled on and on till they gave up counting the distance, it was so great, till one day, as they were resting on the banks of a large river in a far country, they saw a great fish swimming in the water. It was so great that nobody heretofore had been able to catch it, and it was in fact the king of all the fishes. It broke all the nets and smashed all the traps. It snapped all the lines that were set for it, and nobody was strong enough to pull it ashore when it did take the hook. The Chinamen saw it, and the elder brother instantly strung his bow, put on a bolt, and shot the great fish as it was swimming in the shallow water. In a few minutes he had it on his shoulder, and they commenced to cross the bridge to the other side of the river.

Now the river was very wide, the current was very swift, and the bridge was not at all strong. It was only made of bamboos and rattan and swung from side to side as the men crossed it. When they got to the middle it began to creak and strain till the two travelers were in great fear it would break. The one who had killed it turned to his brother and said :

"O brother, the fish is so heavy I am afraid the bridge will break. Please draw your magic sword and cut it in halves, and then we will be able to get to the other side in safety."

The younger brother therefore drew his sword and cut the fish in halves; but he did not yet know how sharp the sword was, for he cut the fish in halves, it is true, but not only that, but the whole bridge as well, so that his brother fell into the water and was immediately swept from his sight. On his part he could not of course cross, now the bridge was down, so he returned to the same side of the river and ran along the bank looking to see whether his brother would be swept ashore in some shallow place; but although he ran till he was exhausted and then traveled for many days by the side of the river through the jungle, he could discover no trace of his lost brother.

Swiftly down the stream his brother was carried. He tried to swim first to one bank and then to the other as the current swept him along, but in vain. At last he gave up trying. Nobody knows just how long he was in the water, but for many days he floated, and when he was on the point of dying from exhaustion, cold, and hunger, his feet touched bottom, and, more dead than alive, he crawled up the bank to dry land.

He found that he had landed near a garden, and, on climbing over the wall, he discovered that it belonged to the king. He was too tired to climb back again, however, so sank on the ground and the next instant fell asleep from sheer weariness.

Now it happened that the king of that country had just died, and his *amats* had taken out the royal chariot and were drawing it around the city looking for the proper person to become king. As they went along they saw this young man sleeping in the royal garden with his magic bow beside him. He had come from nobody knew where. He was so strong that the river even could not kill him. Above all, he had a wonderful magic bow which none of the *amats* or nobles could bend, so they came to the conclusion that he indeed was the man who should be king of the country, and he was crowned with great pomp and magnificence.

The other brother had been left standing on the bridge when the elder fell into the water, as we have said, and for many days he followed the river bank till he too arrived in a far country. It was a very strange country. There were no men there, only monkeys, but they were the very cleverest monkeys that ever lived, and were ruled over by a *nang me prah*, that is, a queen, just as men are ruled. This queen of the monkeys fell in love with the Chinaman and married him, so that he became king of Monkey Land. They built a palace for him on the top of the highest tree in the jungle. Every seventh day they brought him food. Some brought plantains, some mangoes, some rice, and some fish fresh caught in the river.

The elder brother had now been king of the country where he had landed for some years, and one day he remembered his younger brother, whom he had left standing on the broken bridge with the sword in his

hand. He therefore called his *amats* and told them he was going on a long journey, and that they must rule well and justly till he returned. He then called his favorite servants and set out to discover his brother. They had a great store of provisions carried by coolies. He had his royal elephants, on which he could ride when traveling over the steep mountain roads and to carry his chief queens, and ponies for riding over the plains.

One night, however, he became separated from his followers and lost his way. He shouted and called, but shouted and called in vain. He could not find a trace of them. Servants, horses, elephants, and goods were all gone, and he was in great fear that he would die in the jungle. When morning broke he was much surprised to see that he had arrived at a city, but that the houses were all built on the tops of the trees, and on looking closer, he discovered that instead of people living in these houses the inhabitants were all large monkeys. Not a man was to be seen, and the monkeys were very fierce and screamed at him in anger from the top of every tree. One especially he noticed as being more fierce than any of the others, and he accordingly leveled his magic bow and shot it dead. As it fell from the tree to the ground he heard all the friends of the dead monkey come rushing out of their houses on the tops of the trees calling to one another that a man had killed one of their brethren, and asking that their friends would come to kill the man who had been guilty of the deed.

...standing at the top of the tree was the long-lost brother." Page 37.

After a little time the king came to a tree that was taller than any other in the jungle, and upon it was a palace. Stairs led from the door of the palace to the ground, and as he looked more closely he saw a man up there. In great joy he called out to him, asking to be directed. "I am the king of a far country," he said, "and I am on a journey to search for my brother, whom I have not seen for many, many years. Last night I lost my way. Will you take pity on me and show me the way and I will give you a great reward?"

"Who was your brother?" asked the man in the tree.

"He was a Chinese student," returned the king, "and he had a wonderful magic sword. One day as we were traveling he cut a great fish in two, but such was the virtue residing in the magic sword that he not only cut the fish in halves but the bridge as well, so I left him standing on the end of the bridge."

You may imagine how pleased the king was when he discovered that the man standing at the top of the tree was the long-lost brother for whom he was searching, and he made ready to ascend to his house in the tree-top.

At that moment a little monkey ran down the tree toward him, and he kicked it aside, saying, "Out of my way, little monkey."

The small monkey in great anger said: "I am not a monkey, but your nephew."

"My nephew!" exclaimed the king in great astonishment. "What do you mean by that?"

His brother, the monkey king, then explained to him that he had married the queen of all the monkeys and that this was their child, that he ruled over all the monkeys, who had built this palace for him and every seventh day brought him tribute of food.

"I am sorry to say, then," said the elder brother, "that I have killed one of your subjects," and at the same moment the wife and son of the dead monkey approached their king.

"Our lord," said they, "the man yonder has been guilty of a great crime. He entered the domains of our lord and although we did nothing to him, yet he raised his bow and killed one of the servants of our lord. Therefore our lord's servants demand that he shall be killed too."

"I am very sorry," said the king of the monkeys, "that you have killed that special monkey. He was very clever and brave. He was also one of my chief *amats*, and his friends will assuredly kill you."

The monkeys were now assembling by hundreds and calling to each other everywhere. Every treetop appeared alive with angry figures all calling for vengeance on the man who had killed their friend.

The king, however, who had taken sides with his brother, was not afraid, and said he could kill all the monkeys in the country; and he drew his sword and cut in halves the monkey nearest to him. To his great surprise, however, the two halves of the monkey he had killed each became a whole monkey and attacked him again, so that he now had two to fight in-

stead of one. If he cut off the hand or leg of a monkey with his long sword, it immediately turned into two, and he soon saw that unless he devised some other way of fighting them they would soon kill them both.

He therefore rushed off to the jungle and got a great hollow bamboo. He then went to a bees' nest and swept all the bees into it, and caught a great many scorpions and centipedes, snakes and spiders. When the monkeys came toward him to renew the fight, he opened one end of the bamboo and the insects and reptiles, swarming out, very angry at being kept prisoners in the hollow bamboo, soon drove the monkeys off so that the two brothers were able to escape. Shortly afterward they found the escort of the king and together returned to the city where the good elder brother made the younger his chief *amat.*

Now when the younger brother became *amat*, he of course saw what a great king his brother was. He saw his subjects kneel before him ; he saw the royal elephants, oxen, horses, and buffaloes ; he saw the riches in money, jewels, and goods that belonged to him ; that his queens were the most beautiful women in the land ; and he became jealous. Then he coveted all these things. The next step was easy ; he determined to kill his brother and become king in his stead. Then he began to ponder and plot how best he could destroy the brother who had been so good to him. He did not remember how that same brother had left all these things to come and hunt for him ; how he had given him

riches and honor and position, so that now he was chief minister and next to him in power. No, he did not think of any of these things, but like the ungrateful man that he was, thought only that his brother had more than he.

He soon came to the conclusion that he could not kill his brother in the city, for everybody loved the king, and he feared that his crime would be discovered, so he was obliged to wait until they should be alone in the jungle together. The opportunity soon came. One day the king was out hunting and had gotten separated from all his followers. His brother the *amat* was a short distance ahead when he saw, just in front of him, a very deep hole, so deep in fact that it was impossible to see the bottom. In great excitement he turned and beckoned to the king as fast as he could, calling out in a loud voice that he had something very wonderful to show him.

The king thought that at least he had discovered a mountain of rubies and came running up. He knelt by the side of the hole but could see nothing.

"There is nothing down there," said he.

"Let our lord lean a little farther over," said the cunning *amat*. "He will then see the most wonderful thing in the world."

The king bent farther over and his wicked brother gave him a push that sent him headlong to the bottom.

He had now succeeded in all his plans; he had reached the height of his ambitions, but although he became king he was not happy. He had trouble all

the time. It is true he had his brother's riches, that he rode the royal elephants, wore the royal robes, and lived in the royal palace, but he had trouble with his *amats*, with his soldiers, and his people, and therefore instead of being happy as he expected he would be, he was unhappy and miserable.

If he had only known what was happening in the jungle he would have been more anxious still. His brother was not dead as he thought. The fall to the bottom of the hole did not kill him and he was only a prisoner. His followers had all gone back to the city with his wicked brother. He called, but called in vain. He heard nothing but the echo of his own cries, and he was about to give up in despair, when it happened that the mighty Lord Sa Kyah coming through the jungle heard his cries and inquired the cause. The king did not know that this was the Lord Sa Kyah, but told him all that had happened. Lord Sa Kyah was very angry with the king's heartless brother and created at the bottom of the hole a lily of the kind that has a very long stalk. The king sat upon the blossom of the lily which then began to grow very rapidly, and as it grew carried the king up toward the mouth of the hole.

As he gradually rose toward daylight he saw that a tree was growing at the very edge of the pit, and that some of the branches hung over. He saw also that a monkey was busily engaged in feeding on the leaves and fruit. The lily, of course, made no noise as it pursued its upward path ; the king also kept quiet so as not to frighten the monkey, and when he was near enough

suddenly put forth his hand and caught it by the tail. The monkey screamed and kicked, fought and scratched, but in vain ; the king held on, and at last the monkey climbed down the tree taking the king with him, and the latter was speedily standing once more on solid ground and able to offer up his thanks to the mighty Lord Sa Kyah.

The king was not long in reaching the city and when he arrived, to his great sorrow he saw, as he expected, his ungrateful brother reigning, while the people all sorrowed for their old king. He determined to wait awhile before he declared himself, feeling that the Lord Sa Kyah who had already once helped him when in trouble and danger would aid him in regaining his lost kingdom ; so he went into the poorest part of the city, put on the poorest and most ragged clothes that he could find, and sat near the gate of the city begging, from whence he often saw his brother riding by in state.

One day the heralds came riding by and stood in the open space fronting the market where the gambling booths are, and gave notice that the king had commanded that if anybody could bend the magic bow belonging to the late king, his brother, he was to be made the chief *amat* of the kingdom and receive many and great presents besides.

As may be imagined, the next day there was a great crowd gathered together at the great gate of the palace, waiting for the king. At last out he came with all his ministers and followed by attendants bearing golden umbrellas. Behind him came a soldier carrying over

his shoulder the magic bow which was placed at the king's feet. The king called upon his soldiers to come and bend the bow, and the strongest of them came forward, but although they pulled and tugged, tugged and strained, they could not bend it. Then the people of the city, or "the king's people," as they loved to call themselves in contradistinction to the people who lived in the jungle villages, tried, but met with no better success than the soldiers. They could not bend the bow. The king then ordered the *amat löng* to call the men from the jungle. The very strongest coolies, those who carried heavy burdens over the mountains, came in answer to the king's summons, but although some of them could carry fifty *soie* over the highest mountain they could not draw the cord a hand's-breadth.

The king, much disappoineed, was about to return to the palace when a beggar man approached and bowing at his feet said he was able to draw the bow and fire an arrow from it. The king was angry at what he thought was the presumption of this beggar. The soldiers derided him, saying that the bravest of them could not draw the bow and how was a beggar to do it? The coolies also asked him whether he could carry fifty *soie* over Loi Mawk Pah that was called the Cloud Mountain, because its head was often in the clouds. But the beggar asked to be allowed to try and the king gave orders that he should be given the bow, at the same saying that he assuredly should be made *amat löng* if he was successful, but if he could not bend the bow, he should be put to death immediately.

The beggar assented to these terms and seized the bow. He took hold of the string and without any show of strength pulled it a hand's-breadth, and then as the king and his courtiers looked on in amazement he pulled it to its full length, placed the string on the ivory trigger, put an arrow on it, and asked the king where he should shoot.

"Straight up into the air," said the king. The beggar raised the bow, twang went the string, and the arrow whizzed out of sight. Everybody stood looking up into the sky when suddenly one of the courtiers gave a warning cry. It came too late. The arrow had gone straight up, turned, and fell almost on the same spot from whence it was shot. Almost, but not quite, for in its fall it struck the upturned face of the king and he fell dead.

A great cry was raised as the king fell and the guards rushed forward to seize the beggar and lead him to immediate execution, but he waved them off with a gesture of his hand. The next instant his rags fell from him and he stood before them in the royal robes of a king.

Thus we see that the younger brother, although indeed he had not murdered his brother the king, yet did kill him in his thoughts and intentions, and he suffered the punishment that is always meted out to the man who kills his fellow.

STORY OF THE PRINCESS NANG KAM UNG

THERE was once a king who reigned over one of the largest States in the hill and water country. For a long time there had been war between him and the *sau hpa* of the neighboring State, but at last his soldiers had been successful, and his enemy had been driven out of his possessions, which had thereupon been added to his own. A great feast had been given when his soldiers returned to their homes, and he was now sitting with his queens and his seven daughters in the palace watching a performance given in honor of the victory. He praised the actors for their skill, and then asked his daughters whether they had enjoyed the performance. They one and all assured him that they had enjoyed it much, and then turning to them he continued:

"That is right, my daughters, enjoy yourselves to-day and to-morrow and all through your lives. You are the daughters of a mighty king, and it is your lot to be happy and enjoy yourselves all your lives, therefore again I say enjoy yourselves and be happy."

The eldest of the daughters, who was a perfect courtier said: "O our lord, our luck is fortunate, because it depends on that of the lord our father, and who is so fortunate as he?"

The king was very pleased with the flattery of his

daughter, and promised to grant any request she would make of him.

The youngest daughter, however, was young and foolish, and had not yet learned the truth that in a king's presence it is not well always to say what one thinks, and therefore she said to her sister: "Your luck may depend on the luck of the lord our father, but mine is my own and depends upon myself alone."

When the king heard this he was very angry that one of his daughters, and she the youngest too, should have the presumption to say that she depended for anything at all on any other than he, and he determined to punish her.

For a long time he pondered on the best way to do this and at last devised a plan which, if severe, was at least novel.

He called his *amats* to go throughout the whole land and search for the poorest man in all his kingdom, and when they had found him they were to bring him to the palace and he would marry his youngest daughter to him, and then, said he, "We will see about luck after that."

Day after day the heralds searched the land but they could not find a man poor enough to suit the king. All who were brought before him acknowledged that they had something valuable, either a little money, a precious stone, or a distant relative who was rich and from whom they could borrow a little if necessary. A man of this description would not suit the angry king. He wanted one poorer than that.

At last the *amat löng*, or chief minister, brought a man before him and said that he was the poorest in all the land. His name was Ai Du Ka Ta. He was a woodseller in the bazaar, who every day went into the jungle and picked up the dead branches of the trees that had fallen to the ground, and brought them to the market every fifth day to sell. So poor was he that he did not even own the sword that is the almost inseparable companion of the Shan and is used, among other things, to cut down the small trees that are left to dry for firewood, so he had to be content to pick up the small branches that he found under the trees, and got a proportionately small price when he carried his load into the bazaar.

When he appeared before the king, his trousers were all fringed at the bottom where they had been torn by the thorns in the jungle. His turban months before had been white, but now it was a deep gray ; it was only half its original length and was full of holes. Jacket he had none, and when the king asked him how many blankets he had upon his bed at home to keep him warm at night when the cold wind brought the rain up the valley, he answered sorrowfully, "Not one, our lord." He had no relative except an old mother whom he was obliged to support, and who was known throughout the district in which she lived as the woman with the bitterest tongue in all the land, and when too sick to move from her mat, she would yet fill the air with poisoned words.

The king was very pleased with his *amat löng* for

finding Ai Du Ka Ta, and gave him a very fine horse as a reward. Then he called his daughter, took away all her fine clothes and married her to this poorest man in his realm and drove her out of the palace amid the jeers and taunts of the very people who, before her disgrace, had waited upon her every word and had done her bidding while they trembled before her. The king also took away her old name and commanded that in future she was to be known as Nang Kam Ung, which means, "The woman whose luck depends upon herself."

The house, or rather hut, to which Ai Du Ka Ta took his bride was in the jungle. It was only four bamboo poles stuck in the ground and covered with dried grass and bushes. Not even a sleeping mat was on the ground—there was no floor—and the chattie in which he cooked his rice had a hole in it, and had to be set upon three stones sideways over the fire with the hole uppermost, to prevent the water leaking and putting out the fire.

Fortunately the girl's mother had helped her to smuggle out her "birth-stone," which was a large, valuable ruby, and so she took it off her finger and gave it to her husband, telling him to go and sell it and buy clothes and food for both of them.

Ai looked at the stone and said, "Who will give me food and clothes for a little red stone like that? We have no fools or mad men living near here who would do such a foolish thing as that," for you must remember he had lived in the jungle all his life, and had never heard of precious stones, much less seen one till now.

His friends were just as ignorant of its value as he was. He went from house to house in the little village near, but all laughed at him till he became disgusted, threw the stone away in the jungle and came home in a very ill humor with his wife for leading him such a wild-goose chase, and making him appear foolish in the eyes of the few people he knew.

His wife was in great distress when she found that he had thrown the ruby away, and told her husband that if he had gone to the city and taken it to the jewelers, instead of to the ignorant people in the jungle, they would have given him in return enough money to keep them in food and clothing all the hot season and build a new house into the bargain.

Ai looked at her and said : "Indeed, that is a thing good to marvel at. Why, I know where there are coolie-basket loads of such red stones in the dry bed of a river near where I gather sticks for fire-wood in the jungle, waiting for anybody to carry away, and I never thought them worth the labor of taking to the bazaar."

The princess was full of joy when she heard this, and the next morning they borrowed two coolie baskets from a man in the village. Bright and early they went to the river bed, and there, even as Ai had said, were basket loads of fine rubies. They gathered them up carefully and buried most of them, covering over the hole with a flat stone, so that no one would discover their hoard, and then the princess, picking out a double handful of the largest and clearest ones, sent them to her father.

The king, when he saw the jewels, instead of being pleased, fell into a great passion, called the unfortunate *amat löng* into his presence, and after rating him soundly, deprived him of all his goods, houses, and lands, deposed him from office, and drove him from his presence as poor as Ai himself had been.

"I ordered you to call a poor man," roared the king to the trembling man before him. "I said he was to have no goods or property at all, and here the very next day he sends me a double handful of the very best rubies I ever saw in my life."

In vain the culprit assured the king that the day before Ai was certainly the poorest man in the whole kingdom, and complained that the jewels must have been the work of some *hpea*, whom he had unwittingly offended, and who had therefore determined on his ruin in revenge. The king would listen to no excuse, and the unhappy *amat* was glad to crawl from his presence before resentment had carried him to the length of ordering his execution.

The very next night a wonderful golden deer entered the royal garden where the king was accustomed to si when it became too warm in the palace, and after doing an immense amount of mischief, eating favorite flowers and otherwise destroying and ruining the garden, i leaped over the fence and disappeared in the earl morning fog, just as the guards were arousing them selves from sleep. It was in truth not a golden deer a the guards had told the king, but a *hpea* that had as sumed this form ; but the king not knowing this ordere

his heralds to go through the city immediately and call upon all the inhabitants to come early next morning to help their lord catch it. Ai was summoned with the rest of the people. He had no horse, but going to the city gate that day he saw that a race between horses belonging to the king was about to be run. Ai was a good horseman, and asked the head horse-feeder of the king to let him ride one of the animals. He rode, and rode so well that he won the race, and that official was so pleased with him that he promised to grant him any request in his power. Ai asked for the privilege of riding the same horse at the hunt next day, and the request was readily granted, and thus it happened that, next morning when he went to the place appointed, he rode a horse that was faster than any other there except the one the king himself rode.

The people were divided into four parties ; one toward the north, one toward the south, one east, and one west. The king stationed himself with the party at south, and the *amats* were at the north, and when the deer was at last driven out of the jungle by the beaters it headed toward the king and dashed by him at great speed.

The *hpea* that had taken the form of the deer wished to have some fun at the king's expense, and therefore kept ahead just where the king could see him all the while, sometimes but a cubit or two away from him, and then when the country was open, darting far in advance. So swiftly did they go that in a few minutes the men on foot were left behind, and after a while all

except those upon the very fastest horses were distanced, till at last only the king and Ai were left, the latter but a little behind the king. All day long the chase continued till, just as the sun was setting and men and horses were both exhausted, the deer made straight for a precipice that appeared to block the path on each hand as far as the eye could reach. The king was congratulating himself that the deer could not possibly escape now, when he saw right before him an opening in the rock, and the next instant the *hpea* disappeared in the cave and the king was obliged to give up the chase, for even if his horse could have carried him any farther, which it could not, the cave was so dark that nothing could be seen inside.

The king fell from his horse almost dead with fatigue, and managed to crawl under a wide-spreading banyan tree that grew near. The only other person there was Ai, and he, coming to the king, massaged his limbs till the tired monarch fell asleep. After a while he awoke and Ai asked him to eat some rice he had prepared, but the king said he was too tired to eat anything; but at last he managed to eat a little sweet, glutinous rice that the princess had cooked in a hollow piece of bamboo and given to her husband before he set out that morning.

The king was very grateful and asked Ai his name, but the latter was afraid to tell what his real name was so, as his mother years before had been in the habit of selling betel-nut in the bazaar, he told the king that his name was Sau Boo, or betel-nut seller.

The king was very pleased with him and promised him great rewards when they got back to the palace; but in a few minutes he had dropped asleep again, and Ai sat alone keeping guard.

It was very fortunate that he too did not go to sleep, for as every one knows, the banyan is a sacred tree, and this one was inhabited by a *hpea* who was noted for being one of the cruelest and most dreaded spirits in all the land. Ai roused the king and told him there was a *hpea* in the tree and begged him not to sleep there for it would assuredly kill them both before morning.

The king said, "Wake me not, trouble me not. From my head to my feet, I am nothing but aches and pains. Were I to move I should die. I may as well die at the hands of the *hpea*." So saying he fell asleep again, and Ai did not dare to disturb him, but watched all night long.

During the night Ai heard the *hpea* grumbling to himself several times and promising himself the pleasure of killing them on the morrow, so he pretended to be asleep so that he could hear what the *hpea* said and if possible thwart him.

"These mortals have presumed to sleep under my tree," he heard him say, "but it shall be the last time they sleep anywhere. Let me see," he continued, "how shall I kill them? Which will be the best way? Ah, I know. Early to-morrow when they get ready to leave, I will break the tree in two, and the top shall fall on them. If, however, they escape, I will saw

through the supports of the first bridge, so that it will break when they are in the middle, and they will fall to the bottom of the valley below. Then if that should fail, I will loosen the stones of the arch of the city gate so that it will fall on them as they pass underneath, and if that does not kill them, when the king arrives at his palace and being thirsty with his long ride calls for water, I will change the water in the goblet to sharp needles that will stick in his throat and kill him. If he does not drink the water, however, he will assuredly be very tired and will go to sleep immediately, and I will send an immense rat into his room that will kill him without doubt.''

Having finished making his plans, the *hpea* left the tree and started the work of preparing the different traps for the mortals who had enraged his hpeaship by daring to sleep under the tree, and thus profane his home.

The king was frightened half to death when he awoke next morning, and found that he had been sleeping all night under the tree of that special *hpea;* but Ai, or Sau Boo as the king called him, told him not to be frightened for he could save his life if the king would only follow his advice and do as he told him.

The king promised to follow his words implicitly, and also promised him unheard-of rewards if he only helped him to get to his palace in safety.

The first danger was the tree, and so Ai got their horses ready and under the pretense of allowing them to eat grass before setting out on their journey, h

gradually worked them nearer and still nearer the edge of the tree, and then, with one bound, they both galloped out from under it. At the same instant there was a great crash and the whole top of the tree fell to the ground. So near did it fall on them that the king's turban was torn from his head by one of the upper branches, but beyond this no harm was done.

Next, instead of riding over the bridge, they went along the bank a little distance, and soon found a place where the *hük* was narrow and leaped their horses to the other side. While they were jumping, Ai threw a heavy stone he had brought with him on to the bridge, and the *hpea*, who fortunately was near-sighted, thinking it was the tread of the horses, broke it down, so that fell into the water fifty feet below, but the king and his follower were safe on the other side.

The next danger was the city gate. They walked their ponies slowly as though they were very tired, till they came to within a cubit of the gate, and then galloped through at the top of their speed, and crash went the gateway behind them. They were covered with dust but not hurt.

The king was very thankful to have arrived at his palace and being very thirsty with the journey and excitement, as the cunning *hpea* had expected, called for a drink of water, but ere he could place the cup to his lips his faithful follower turned it upside down, and instead of water, out fell a cupful of sharp needles, and again the king's life was saved.

Worn out with his ride he told his servants to pre-

pare his room as he would sleep. Ai called the chief guard and told him to have a lamp burning all night, to take his sharpest sword with him, and guard the king carefully. In the middle of the night when the tired king was sleeping soundly, into the room came creeping slowly, slowly, the biggest rat ever seen. It had long, sharp teeth and wicked glaring eyes, and made toward the king. But the guard, warned by Ai, was on the watch, and just as the rat was about to spring at the king's throat, the soldier with a sweep of his long, sharp sword cut off its head, and thus the king through the cleverness of one man escaped the last danger and could now live without fear.

The next morning the king called his heralds and bade them go into the city and summon Sau Boo to come to the palace to be rewarded. They searched and called, but searched and called in vain. No man ever heard of a man by that name, and the king was fast getting angry when the *amats* told him that they personally had gone to every house except one, and that was the house of Ai. The king in surprise ordered them to call his son-in-law. "He may be able to tell us something about him," he observed. Ai accordingly obeyed his summons, but the king was more surprised yet when Ai told him that Sau Boo and himself were one and the same, and that it was he who had rescued the king from so many dangers.

At first his father-in-law became angry and refused to believe him, but Ai gave an account of everything that had happened from the time when the deer

broke cover, till the rat was killed by the guard, and thus convinced the king of his truthfulness.

The king then made a great feast, called all his ministers and generals together, and made a proclamation that Ai in future should be his *amat löng* and should be king when he himself died.

Thus did the princess prove that her luck really depended upon herself, and not on the king, and to-day we say, "May your luck be as good as the luck of Nang Kam Ung."

HOW THE HARE DECEIVED THE TIGER.

AT the beginning of the world a hare, tiger, ox, buffalo, and horse became friends and lived together. One day the tiger was out hunting when, it being in the middle of the hot season, the jungle caught fire, and a strong wind blowing, it was not long before the whole country was in flames. The tiger fled, but the fire followed. Never mind how fast he ran, the flames followed him, till he was in great fear of being burned alive. As he was rushing along he saw the ox feeding on the other side of the river and called out to him :

"O friend ox, you see the fire is following me wherever I go. Where is a place of refuge that I can escape the fire?"

Now close to the tiger was a jungle full of dried grass, such as the Shans use for thatching their houses, and the ox replied, "Go to the grass jungle yonder, my brother, and you will be safe."

But dried grass is the most inflammable thing in the whole hill and water country, and so here, not only did the flames follow the tiger, but they ran ahead of him and threatened to engulf him on every side. In great anger he roared at the ox, "False deceiver, if ever I escape from this danger, I will return and kill you," but the ox only laughed at him and continued eating.

In desperation, the tiger leaped over the flames and found himself near the horse. "O friend horse," he cried, "where can I go? I am in great danger of being burned to death."

Now it happened that once the tiger had been very rude to the horse and called him many bad names, so now he thought this was a good opportunity to be revenged; so he said: "Yonder is a big bamboo jungle, run to that and you are safe"; but the tiger found that the horse was also a false friend, for the fire following him speedily ignited the tall bamboos which burned fiercely and falling from above, almost completely covered the poor beast.

At the beginning of the world the tiger was a beautiful yellow color, but the bamboos falling all over him, burnt him in stripes, and since that time his descendants have had long black stripes all over their coats.

"When I have escaped from this," yelled the angry tiger, "I will come back and kill you."

"Very good," sneered the horse, "and I will arch my neck so that you can get a good bite," but this was said to deceive the tiger, as the horse intended to lash out with his hind feet when the tiger came to fight him. Nevertheless, from that day the necks of all horses have been arched, and they cannot fight an enemy in front, but are obliged to arch their necks, lower their heads, and kick from behind.

The tiger, by this time tired to death and suffering from the burns of the bamboos, saw the buffalo and accosted him as he had his other friends.

"O good friend buffalo," he cried, "I am in great danger of being burned alive. The horse and the ox have not only deceived me, but in following their advice I have arrived at a worse condition than before. What can I do to be freed from this great danger?"

The buffalo looked up from the cool river where he was enjoying a bath, and taking compassion on him said: "If you will catch hold of my throat I will duck you in the river and so you shall escape from the danger that is following you."

So the tiger seized the good buffalo by the throat and was held under water till the fire had burnt itself out. The tiger was very grateful to the buffalo and made an agreement with him that from that time no tiger should ever kill a buffalo, and it is only the very worst tigers, those that kill men, that ever kill a buffalo, and the tigers that are guilty of killing buffaloes are sure to be killed themselves, sooner or later.

The tiger held so fast to the buffalo that when the latter came out of the water, his throat and neck were all white, and buffaloes all have that mark on their necks and throats till this very day.

The tiger was so cold after his bath that he shook and shivered as though he had fever, and seeing a little house made of dried grass a short distance off he went to it and found that a hare was living there.

"Good friend," said the tiger, "I am so cold I am afraid I shall die. Will you take compassion on me and allow me to rest in your house and get warm before I return home?"

"Come in, our lord," said the hare. "If our lord deigns to honor my poor house with his presence, he will confer a favor that his slave will never forget."

The tiger was only too glad to go into the hare's house, and the latter immediately made room for him by sitting on the roof. Soon the tiger heard click! click! click! and he called out: "O friend hare, what are you doing up there on the roof of your house?"

Now the hare was really at that moment striking fire with her flint and steel, but she deceived the tiger and said, "It is very cold up here, and our lord's slave was shivering," but the next moment the spark struck the dried grass on the roof and the house was soon in flames.

The tiger dashed out just in time and turned in a rage on his late host, but the hare was far away, having jumped at the same moment that the spark set fire to the roof of the house.

The tiger gave chase, but after a while he saw the hare sitting down and watching something intently, so he asked, "What are you looking at?"

"This is a fine seat belonging to the Ruler of the Hares," returned she.

"I would like to sit on it," said the tiger.

"Well," said the hare, "wait till I can go and ask our lord to give you permission."

"All right, I will watch till you come back and will not kill you as I intended doing, if you get me permission to sit on it," said the tiger.

Now this was not a chair at all, but some hard sharp

stones that the hare had covered with mud and shaped with her paws to deceive the tiger. The hare ran off a long distance and pretended to talk with some one and then called out: "The lord of the chair says, our lord the tiger may sit, if he throws himself down upon it with all his might. This is our custom."

The tiger flung himself upon what he thought was the chair with all his might, but the soft mud gave way and he fell upon the stones underneath and hurt his paws badly. He therefore sprang up and vowed vengeance on the hare that he could just see far off in the distance.

By and by as the hare was running along she saw a large wasps' nest hanging from the branch of a tree, so she sat down and watched it intently. When the tiger came up he was so curious to know what the hare was looking at so intently that he did not kill her, but instead asked her what she was looking at.

The hare showed the tiger the wasps' nest on the tree and said: "That is the finest gong in all the hill and water country."

"I would like to beat it," said the tiger.

"Just wait a minute," returned the hare, "and I will go to the lord of the gong and ask permission for you to beat it."

The hare ran till she was far away in the jungle, and then at the top of her voice called out: "If you wish to beat the gong, the lord of the gong says you must strike it as hard as you can with your head. That is his custom."

The tiger butted at the nest with all his might and made a big jagged rent in its side, and out flew the angry wasps in swarms, completely covering the poor tiger, who with a dreadful yell of pain tore away from his tormentors. His face was all swollen, and from that day till the present, the faces of tigers have all been wide and flat.

Again he chased the hare, and when the smart from the stings of the wasps had subsided a little, he found to his great joy that he was gaining on his enemy fast. The hare on her part saw that the tiger would soon catch her and looked around for some means of escape, and spied just before her a snake half in and half out of its hole.

The hare stopped as before and sat gazing at the snake so intently that the tiger instead of killing her as he had intended to do, asked her what it was in the hole.

"This," returned the hare, "is a wonderful flute that only kings and nobles are allowed to play. Would our lord like to play?"

"Indeed I would," said the tiger; "but where is the lord of this wonderful flute? Whom shall I ask for permission?"

"If our lord watches right here," said the cunning hare, "his slave will go to the lord of the flute and ask permission," and the tiger, well content, sat down to wait.

Again the cunning hare deceived the tiger by pretending to ask permission, and when a long distance

off he called as before: "Our lord has permission to play the flute. Let him put it in his mouth and blow with all his might. This is the custom of the lord of the flute."

The foolish tiger immediately took the snake's head into his mouth, but the sound that followed came from the tiger, not from the flute, and a terrible yell he gave as the snake bit his mouth! But the hare was far away and would soon have been safe but for an unlooked for accident that nearly ended her life.

The people who lived in that part of the hill and water country were at war with the State that joined them on the north, and thinking that the soldiers of the enemy would soon invade their country they had made a trap in the middle of the path over which the hare was running. First they dug a hole so deep that should anybody fall in, it would be impossible to climb out again. The sides of the pit were dug on the slant so that the opening was smaller than the bottom. Over the top they had placed thin strips of bamboo that would break if any extra weight came upon them and they had covered the whole with grass and leaves so that no traveler would know that a trap was there. Into this hole fell the poor little hare.

Presently the tiger came up to see where the hare had gone, and when he saw the hole in the middle of the path, he called out, "Where are you, friend hare?" and the hare from the bottom of the trap called out, "I have fallen into a trap."

Then the tiger sat on the ground and just bent double

with laughter to think that at last he had the hare in his power, but the little animal down in the hole although she did not say anything, thought harder in a few minutes than the tiger had in all his life. By and by as she looked up through the hole she had made in the roof, she saw that the sky overhead was getting darker and darker as a storm was coming on, so in great glee, although she pretended to be very much frightened, she called out as loudly as ever she could :

"Our lord tiger ! our lord tiger ! "

At first the tiger did not answer, so the hare then called, "Does not our lord see the great danger approaching ? Let our lord look at the sky."

The tiger looked up and saw the dark clouds coming slowly, slowly on, covering the whole sky ; his laughter stopped and he soon began to get very frightened.

After a while, when it had become still darker, he called to the hare: "O friend, what is the matter with the sky ? What is going to happen ? "

Then the hare replied: "Our lord, the sky has fallen where you see it is dark ; that is far away, but in a few minutes it will fall here and everybody will be crushed to death."

The foolish tiger was now frightened half to death and called to the hare: "O friend, I have treated you badly in trying to kill you. Do not be angry and take revenge on me, but take compassion on my terrible condition, and graciously tell me how to escape this danger, and I swear that I will never try to harm you more."

It was the hare's turn to laugh now, but she only

laughed quietly to herself, for she was afraid the tiger would hear her, then she said, "Down here our lord's slave is quite safe. If our lord descends, he too will be safe," and before the hare had hardly finished, the cowardly tiger made a jump for the hole the hare had made and joined her at the bottom of the trap.

But the hare was not out yet and she began to plan how she could get out herself and yet keep the tiger in. At last a happy thought struck her. She sidled up to the tiger and began to tickle him in the ribs. The tiger squirmed and twisted first one way and then the other, first to one side and then to the other; at last he could stand it no longer and catching the hare he threw her out of the trap and she landed on solid ground.

As soon as the hare found she was safe, she began to call at the top of her voice: "O men, come! come! I, the hare have deceived the tiger and he is at the bottom of the trap. O men, come! I, the hare call you. Bring your spears and guns; bring your swords, and kill the tiger that I have tricked into entering the trap."

At first the men did not believe the hare, for they did not think that an animal so small as the hare could deceive the tiger, but then they also knew that the hare was very clever and had much wisdom, so they brought their spears and their guns, their swords and their sticks, and killed the tiger in the trap.

Thus did the hare prove that though small she was full of wisdom, and although the tiger was bigger, stronger, and fiercer than she, yet she, through her wisdom, was able to kill him.

THE STORY OF THE TORTOISE.

THERE was once a man who had two wives. Now as everybody knows it is always the chief wife that the husband loves best, while the other instead of being *Mae Long*, is only *Mae Noi*, and this often causes jealousy and trouble in the family. It was so in this case, especially as the chief wife did not have a son to add to her dignity. They each had a daughter, the name of the chief wife's child was Nang Hsen Gaw, and that of the other Nang E.

One day the husband of these women went to the lake to fish. He caught a large number of shell fish and put them on the shore for his wives to bring home. The younger took her share of the load, but, being very hungry, she ate them all. The mother of Nang Hsen Gaw, however, was not greedy like the other woman, and so she put all the fish that were left into her bag and began to trudge slowly toward the house.

Now, the mother of Nang E was a witch, although no one, of course, knew it. Being wicked enough to be a witch, she did not hesitate at committing any other crime, even the most dreadful, and she therefore made up her mind that she would kill the mother of Nang Hsen Gaw so that she could be the chief wife. She got home much sooner than the other woman, as she had no load to carry, and when she saw her husband he natu-

rally asked her where the fish were. "Now," she thought, "here's a good chance to get that woman out of the way," so she told her husband that his other wife was a *pör*, or witch, and she had taken all the fish away from her. Now, witches are of course very much dreaded, so when the poor woman came home with her heavy load of fish, the villagers killed her with their sticks, and she was changed into a tortoise in the lake.

And now at last the mother of Nang E was chief wife, but do you think she was satisfied? Not a bit of it. She heard that her rival was now a tortoise in the lake, and she determined to kill her again.

Some time after this, as Nang Hsen Gaw was in the jungle watching the cows that belonged to her father, she walked along the edge of the lake and was very much surprised to hear her own name called in familiar tones. She looked around, but could see no one, and she was getting very frightened, thinking that it was perhaps a *hpea* who wanted to entice her into the thick jungle so that he could devour her, but at last she looked on the ground at her feet and saw it was a tortoise that was speaking to her.

"Nang Hsen Gaw," it called. "My daughter, *oie* I am your mother who was killed through the wicked acts of my rival, the mother of Nang E. I have arrived at great trouble, and now, instead of being the chief wife of a rich man, I am nothing but a tortoise swimming in the lake. Take pity on me, my daughter, and out of compassion every day bring me cotton thread and raw cotton, so that I can weave and spin."

PUBLIC

Nang Hsen Gaw was a dutiful daughter, and every day when she went to the jungle she took cotton for her mother to spin, and thread for her to weave, and daily talked with her, telling her all the gossip of the village and anything else that she thought her mother would like to hear.

But the mother of Nang E was on the watch, and thinking it strange that the girl should take cotton and thread to the jungle every day, and bring none back with her when she drove the cattle back at night, she followed her, heard her talking with her mother, and thus found out in what part of the lake her enemy was, and laid her plan accordingly.

That evening, unknown to her family, while her husband was busy working in his garden, she went to the house where lived the doctor of the village, unfolded her plans to him and asked for his help. Being an unscrupulous man he agreed, took the silver the woman had pilfered from her husband, and promised to help her. The next day she was taken very sick and her husband called in the doctor, who told him that the woman must have a tortoise from the lake near-by. If she boiled and ate it according to his directions she would get well, if not, she would die. Having performed his part of the bargain he returned to his home at the other end of the village.

Next morning the man went to the lake to get the tortoise. Nang Hsen Gaw was much distressed when she saw her father set out, and her distress became worse when she saw that the wicked stepmother had

directed him to the little pond where her own mother was. The man took a large bucket made out of wicker work, and commenced baling out the water, but Nang Hsen Gaw was able to warn her mother just where her father was, so that when he was on one side of the pond her mother went to the other, but at last he sent the girl home, and in a few minutes secured the tortoise and was soon carrying it away for his wife to eat.

When he got home he gave her the tortoise, little thinking who it was, and then went out, while the witch called Nang Hsen Gaw to watch the pot which had been put over the fire.

Soon the poor girl heard her mother call out. She said that the hot water had reached her knees, and begged her to put out the fire. She commenced to rake out the hot embers from under the pot, when her step mother saw what she was doing, and taking up a heavy bamboo beat her unmercifully and made her put more sticks on the fire. Soon her mother complained again that the heat had reached her shoulders, and again Nang E's mother beat her, and made her put more sticks on the fire. Soon she heard her mother say: "My daughter, *oie!* The hot water has reached my neck and I shall soon be dead. When it is all over, do not let that wicked woman destroy me altogether, but bury me in the jungle," and in a few minutes she was dead.

Nang Hsen Gaw tried her best to get the dead body of her mother, but her stepmother watched her carefully, and all she could not eat herself she gave to the dogs, to prevent her daughter from getting any, but

one dog ran off with his portion into the jungle. Nang Hsen Gaw followed in time to rescue the webbing between the fingers.[1] This was all that was left, but she buried that carefully in the jungle far from the house where her stepmother lived.

The next day as she was walking through the jungle feeding her cows, she heard sweet music. It sounded like twelve organs all playing at the same time, and yet in harmony, each organ blending with the others. In great surprise she hunted around till she came to the spot where she had buried the part of her mother's hand, and saw that during the night this had changed into a beautiful *mai nyung kham* tree.[2] And so this good and dutiful daughter went every day to listen to the tree as she had gone daily to the lake when her mother had been a tortoise, and the tree sang sweeter when she was near than at any other time.

But such a wonderful thing as this could not be kept a secret. Others heard of it and people came from far and near to hear the sweet music come from the tree. One of the *amats* of the great king who "ate"[3] the country, heard that a miracle was to be seen in this jungle, and accordingly reported it to his lord, who sent men to cut the tree down and bring it to his palace. All day long the men worked at the tree, from the time the

[1] The Shans call the two front feet of a quadruped "hands." The digits are called "fingers" not "toes."

[2] The sacred peepul tree.

[3] The Shans do not usually say that a king "rules" over a country, but the expression generally used is that he "eats" it; a very suggestive and alas! too often only too true expression.

country became light till the moon rose at night, but although they had the sharpest of axes and were the most skillful workmen in all the country, yet with all their labor they could only cut through the bark, and during the night the tree grew so quickly that when the morning dawned, it was twice as large as it was the night before, and the marks made by the axes on the bark were covered with new bark harder than ever.

The king was very angry when he heard of the ill success of his woodmen, had them all executed, and sent others, but they had no better success than the first. But this only made the king more stubborn and determined to get the tree at any cost, and he therefore sent the heralds all through the country and made a proclamation that any man who could bring the tree to his palace should be made his *Kem Möng*, that is, heir apparent; should it be a woman, she should become *Nang Me Prah*, or chief queen. Many men therefore came with sharp *pahs* and axes but all were equally unsuccessful, and the king despaired of ever getting the tree, when Nang Hsen Gaw heard of the reward offered by the king, and told the heralds she could bring the tree to his palace. The king was full of joy when he heard this, and made great preparations for her. On her part she simply went to the jungle and, taking off her turban, fastened it around the tree and carried it bodily into the palace where it sang as sweetly every day as when it was in the jungle.

When the mother of Nang E heard of the good fortune that had befallen Nang Hsen Gaw she was very

angry, and calling her own daughter to follow her, she set off for the capital. When she had arrived there she disguised herself and became a servant to the queen, and pondered how she could kill the *Nang Me Prah* and put her own daughter Nang E in her place.

One day this wicked woman told the queen that she had found some fine soap beans and bark, that she was very skillful in shampooing, and as the next day was to be a great feast when the queen would follow the king on her royal elephant, the soap beans would make her black hair blacker, and the gloss glossier than ever, and asked her to allow her to wash the queen's head at a well that was just outside the gate of the palace, near the royal gardens, where the water was very sweet. The queen consented and called her attendants to follow, but the stepmother was much too cunning to allow that, so she told the queen that her method of washing was better than any other woman's but it was a secret, and she would reserve it for her majesty's own private use, but she did not want any of the attendants to see how it was done. If they did, she added, the next day at the feast every lady in the court would have hair as glossy as the queen's, but if they went alone, her hair would be as much more beautiful than any other woman's as the sun is more beautiful than the bamboo torch that lights the way through the jungle at night, when there is no moon. The young queen was not proof against this flattery, and so the two women went alone out of the palace, the very guards who watched at the gates not knowing whither they were going.

They soon arrived at the well, and as the queen was bending over, her long hair covering her face so that she could see nothing, her wicked stepmother suddenly drew a knife and stabbed her to the heart, then, calling her daughter to help, she buried the poor young queen under the road leading to the well. She took the royal robes and put them on her own daughter, Nang E, who returned to the royal palace and entered the royal apartments, all the attendants thinking it was the real queen returned from a bath in the river.

That same afternoon, as the king walked through the palace, he was surprised to see that the wonderful singing tree was all withered and mute. In great distress he called for the queen and ordered her to make the tree sing as before, but although Nang E tried with all her might, she could make no sound. She tapped it softly as she had seen Nang Hsen Gaw do, but all in vain. It was silent.

Now the king was in the habit of wearing Burmese clothing instead of Shan, and one day when he had gone to his room to put on his *ptsoe*, he found that a little sparrow had built, her nest in it. He was a very kind man, and so allowed the little bird to live there, and in gratitude to the king this sparrow was in the habit of telling him all she saw as she flew around the city from morn to night, and whenever the king wished to find out anything that puzzled him, he would often call the sparrow to tell him what to do.

He therefore now called the little bird and asked it what ailed the tree, and the sparrow told him that the

woman who was then in the royal apartments and wearing the clothes of the *Nang Me Prah* was not the real queen, but a woman named Nang E, and seeing her approach, the brave little bird began whistling, "This is not the *Nang Me Prah*, this is Nang E, Nang E. Oh! Nang E!"

In a great rage the king commanded his servants to call the woman, and when she was come into the royal presence she dared not open her mouth to answer the king, for she was not so clever as her mother, who could disguise her voice as well as her face, and she knew that if she began to speak the king would see that she was not Nang Hsen Gaw, so she remained silent. But this did not save her, for the king looked at her and said:

"You wear the robes and jewels of my queen, but you have not the same face, and you are afraid to speak to me," and he immediately called his chief executioner to take her away and cut off her head.

But even this did not bring back the music to the tree, and the king was disconsolate.

The next morning when the guard of the royal garden went to his post, he saw, near the well, a beautiful *mawk moo* flower, took it home with him and placed it in the *chattie* of water that every Shan keeps in his house as an offering to the *hpeas*. The old mother Nai, soon after took her basket and went to the bazaar to buy *puc* for her son's breakfast, but when she returned she was surprised to see that during her absence some one had swept the house, cooked the food, and that the

"morning rice" was all ready to eat. The eating-tray was set out in the middle of the room. The rice and curry was arranged in order on it, and the drinking *chattie* was full of scented water. She called her son and all the neighbors to ask who had done this, but no one could tell her, and in great amazement they sat down to their meal. That evening the same thing happened again. While she was out, the house was again swept, the food was prepared, and the tray arranged as in the morning. For several days this happened, and then the old woman determined to hide and see who did these kind acts. She did so, and was amazed to see that as soon as she had left the house (she went under the floor and looked up through a hole between the bamboos), that a spirit came out of the *mawk moo* flower that her son had brought from the road leading to the well, and commenced to sweep the house. In the midst of it the old woman rushed up to the flower and destroyed it, so that the spirit could not go back to its refuge. At the same instant, it changed into the most beautiful woman ever seen.

That afternoon, Nang Hsen Gaw, for the spirit was she, told old Nai how her stepmother had killed her at the well, and buried her, and how she had been changed into the spirit of the beautiful *mawk moo* flower the guard had brought to the house, and that she would soon go back to the king in the palace.

They neither of them had seen the little sparrow sitting on the roof, but she had been there all the time, and now flew off to the king and told him all that she

had heard. The king gave orders that the wicked mother of Nang E should be executed immediately, and that a band of soldiers should go to the guard's house to escort his bride back in state to the palace, where she reigned many, many years, till she saw her grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow up. As soon as the queen entered the gate, the tree began to play; the withered leaves put on a bright hue, and beautiful flowers burst into bloom; and while Nang Hsen Gaw lived, the tree bloomed and played sweetest music every day.

The lessons that this story teaches are: As surely as the wheels of the cart follow the oxen, so surely will wickedness be punished. If you sin you must suffer. The man who kills another will assuredly meet the same fate.

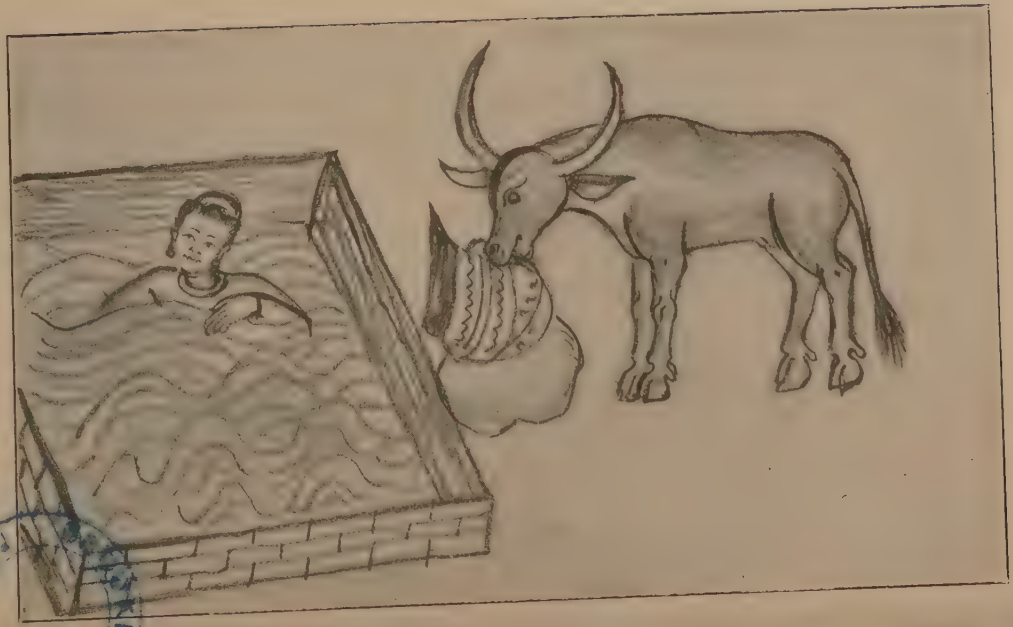
THE SPARROW'S WONDERFUL BROOD.

MANY, many years ago, at the beginning of the world, a little sparrow built her nest on the top of a tall tree that grew near the edge of a lake. In it she laid five little eggs, and never was mother bird prouder than she, and all day long she flew from tree to tree chirping out her joy. So proud in fact was she, and so much noise did she make, that a monkey that lived on the other side of the lake was struck with the remembrance of how he had once dined with great satisfaction on eggs laid by the sparrow's sister, and in a few minutes he was on his way to repeat the performance.

In vain the little bird cried and begged him to spare her brood, promising to show him where the sweetest plantains in all the country were growing; the monkey only laughed at her and climbed the tree to get the prize.

The next moment the robber would have gotten his spoil, and this wonderful story would never have been told, but just then the great lord Sa Kyah looked earthward and saw the tragedy that was taking place.

Like a drop of rain that falls from a tree when the wind blows after a shower, the mighty lord descended, and when the would-be robber reached the nest his hand entered an empty one.



The eggs were soon brought back from the *hpea* country where the lord Sa Kyah had taken them for safety, and in due time were hatched. Out of the first protruded a sharp bill, and a king-fisher, bright of plumage and swift of wing, broke out of its speckled prison. The next egg broke and a buffalo came out, to be followed by a lordly striped tiger from the next. A terrible *hpea-loo*, with head and claws like a bird and body like a man, tore his way out of the next one, already looking around for a man whom he might devour for his first meal.

Only one egg remained, and that the smallest of all, but out of it came a man, and the mighty lord Sa Kyah smiled when he saw him, and said that although he was the smallest and the last, yet he must feed his brothers and take care of them.

One hot day in summer the buffalo that had come out of one of the eggs, walking through the jungle, much troubled by mosquitoes, thought how nice would be a wallow in a hole well known to him under the shade of the trees by the bank of the lake, where the sun had not dried the mud to the hardness of bricks as it had in every other wallow, and accordingly turned his huge body in its direction, and slowly set off toward it.

On his way there he saw on the ground what appeared to him to be a bed of flowers growing on the bank of the lake, and after smelling it carefully over, leisurely ate it all up.

The sun was hot, the earth dry, and the flowers had long ago died, and what the buffalo thought were

flowers were really ten white jackets and ten red skirts. But when he had finished his meal he continued his journey to the wallow, and then with a grunt expressive of great satisfaction, sinking into the soft mud till only the tips of his horns and the top of his head were visible, he closed his eyes and enjoyed himself.

By and by there was a great commotion in the water —shouts, laughter, and jokes, together with a great splashing. The lazy buffalo opened one eye and saw ten young girls who were having great fun in the cool water, throwing it over one another and chasing each other here and there. When they came to the place where they had left their clothes, however, their mirth received a sudden check. They had all disappeared! They stood up to their armpits in the water looking at each other with very long faces till, spying the buffalo in his mud bath, they approached him, and in the most courteous language asked him whether he had seen their dresses.

The great beast closed the eye he had opened, and slowly uncovered the other one, but beyond this took no notice of the maids forlorn. Then, calling him "Kind Brother Buffalo," they begged him to answer them, saying that all the people who left the village to go to the bazaar before the sun had risen would soon be passing on their way home. The buffalo blew a big cloud of mud and water from his nostrils, but said never a word.

Now it happened that the youngest of the sparrow's brood, the man, was in the jungle all the time. He

had seen his brother eat up all the clothes and had heard all the conversation. He had noticed too, that although all the maidens were beautiful, the youngest was the most beautiful girl he had ever seen. He saw how straight was her form, how black was her hair, and that her eyes were the color of the sky when there are many stars but no moon, and he determined to get her for his wife. He therefore now approached the party and told them that he could help them, and that no one besides could tell them where their clothes were, but that they must promise that the one whom he should pick out should be his wife.

To this they agreed, and thus it happened that he became possessed of the most beautiful woman in all the Shan country. So beautiful in fact was she, that it is said the birds stopped in the middle of a song when they saw her. The squirrels stopped half-way up the tree in their search for nuts as she walked under the trees, and her fame spread far and wide.

At this time a hunter came wandering through the jungle in search of game, and saw her standing at her door. He, like everybody else, was struck with her wonderful beauty, and he thought to himself, "For a long time I have been most unfortunate. I have caught but few animals, and their furs have been poor and mangy. Now, if I tell the king of my country about this beautiful girl, he will give me a great reward."

Thus reasoning he set out home and told the king what he had seen, enlarging upon her great beauty till the king resolved to get her at any cost.

He therefore set out, taking with him soldiers and attendants as became such a mighty lord, and when he saw the object of his journey he acknowledged that the hunter had not deceived him, and he determined to take her back with him to the palace ; but at the same time he made up his mind to go about it in a cunning way.

Now this king had a wonderful fighting cock of which he was very proud, and which had never been beaten. It had a beak of iron and spurs as sharp as the knives that come from Lai Hka, and a voice so loud and piercing that every morning when he crowed every other rooster in the city scurried away in fright at the challenge.

The king, therefore, said that he and the woman's husband should have a cock fight. He would wager his country against the other's wife. In great sorrow the man went out into the jungle to think over his misfortune, and while sitting on the ground in a most disconsolate manner he heard a little bird calling his name, and looking up he saw his brother, the kingfisher, perched above him.

"O brother, do not fear," said the bright little bird. "I do not forget that you are my brother and have guarded me long, and now I will surely help you in your trouble."

When the time came for the fight, therefore, and the king's fighting cock stood proudly up, suddenly down from a tree flew the kingfisher, pecked him with his long, sharp bill, and then flew away before he could so

much as turn his head. Time and again this happened till the king's challenger finally stretched himself dead on the ground.

The fight ending in this way, however, did not suit the selfish king a bit, and he therefore said it was not a fair fight, and brought out a large, fierce dog. This dog was the terror of the State, but the king said that it should fight any other dog that could be brought against it for the same stakes as before. The tiger brother, however, was on the watch, and before the dog could get near his opponent, a blow from his paw ended his career.

Still the king persisted in his unjust course, and now declared that the wager should be finally settled by a fight between two buffaloes. Now the buffalo brother was ashamed of the way in which he had treated the girls in the water, and had long wished for an opportunity to retrieve his honor, so that he now fought with such bravery against the royal buffalo that he speedily conquered it.

Then the king, seeing that he was beaten every time, threw off all disguise and said plainly that he had come to get the girl for his wife, had brought soldiers to help him if necessary, and he would take her in spite of losing the different battles, and in spite of her husband or anybody else.

He stepped forward to take her, but he did not know that one more brother yet remained to be heard from, for out of the jungle with a dreadful yell came rushing the *hpea-loo*, his beak open, his claws out-

stretched, and king, soldiers, and courtiers all disappeared down his ravenous maw.

The next month the fortunate man with his beautiful wife became king in the place of his enemy, and lived to be the oldest monarch in the whole of the Shan country.

HOW THE WORLD WAS CREATED.

IN the beginning of the world, many, many cycles ago, so long ago, in fact, that no man knows how long it was, there were no trees, no hills, no land, nothing but water. The wind blew the waters hither and thither, sometimes in great waves, sometimes in quiet ripples; the wind blew, the waves rolled, and that was all.

Now it happened that Gong Gow, the Great Spirit Spider, felt weary with carrying around her heavy burden of eggs wrapped up so carefully in their white covering fastened to her waist, therefore she said to herself:

"I would fain place my eggs in a safe place, but know of none where they can hatch themselves without danger," so she searched through the universe to find a suitable place, and at last she spied the water that is now the world, and in it began to spin her web.

Backward and forward, forward and backward, round and round, in and out she wove, till at last all was done, and full of content she left her eggs in their web prison nest and journeyed away.

The wind blew and drove the water hither and thither as aforetime, and soon little pieces of solid substance caught in the meshes of the web, and behold! as the time passed the solid substance became more

solid till it formed mud and separated itself from the water, and when the mud had dried, lo! it was the earth.

So the eggs of the great Spirit Spider were safely locked up within the earth; by and by they hatched, and breaking forth there appeared the first man, Boo Pau, and the first woman, Myeh Pau, from whom all the ancient people who belonged to the first race were descended.

Many, many years passed and people lived out their lives, till one day the great earth caught fire. It burned fiercer than anybody's imagination can conceive, and it destroyed everything. All the beautiful forests with their green coverings of moss and leaves, all the cities which the first race had builded were burned down, till by and by there was naught more for the fire to consume, and it was then the end of the hot season; the time of wet came soon after, and the rain fell upon the burning earth in such torrents that the whole sky was covered with the steam.

Now it happened that in Möng Hpea, the far-away land where dwell the powerful spirits whom we call "hsangs," the smell of the steam ascended and ascended till all the spirits smelled the sweet scent, and said to themselves:

"Behold, there appears a sweet smell arising from below, what can it be?" and there was much marveling at what could cause such sweet-smelling incense as that then ascending.

And it also happened that in Möng Hpea were nine

spirits, five of them males and four females, and these being of more adventurous spirit than their fellows, determined to find out for themselves where the sweet perfume came from. So they set out on their travels downward. They descended faster and faster, and the faster they descended the sweeter became the smell, till at last they landed upon this world of ours, and bending down to the earth they tore great handfuls of it out and ate it with the greatest relish.

It was morning time when they descended, and they fed upon the fragrant earth all day till the sun set and the shades of evening began to surround them, then the eldest of the spirits looked around upon his fellows, and said :

"Brethren, oie ! it is time that we ascended to our own country," and as the rest assented they stood up to return, but alas ! they could not rise, they had eaten so much earth it had made them too heavy to soar, and from that day to the day they died none of them ever found their way back to the beautiful country of the Hsangs, but had to spend all their lives upon this earth of ours.

Thus we see that it is earthly desires that keep us from the spirit country. We see, or we hear, we smell or desire some earthly thing. We get our desires, but they keep us pinned down to the earth. We cannot go to the spirit country because of them.

When the spirits discovered that they could not return to the Hsang country they agreed that they would marry each other and take up their abode upon this

earth of ours. But here arose a difficulty ; there were five male hsangs but only four females ! There was chance of a great quarrel, but the strongest of them, his name was Hsin Kyan, thought within himself :

" I am stronger than any of my brothers and could easily defeat them and marry whom I will, but what merit would there be in that ? I will ask them whether they would be willing to make me king and each of them give me of their daughters when they are old enough, then in time I shall have wives and power as well." Thus we see it is the man who is willing to control his desires and wait who becomes great.

Hsin Kyan's brethren were very glad to make the agreement and thus it was that he became the ruler of them all. When the daughters of the others were old enough, they brought them to the king, and from that day it has been the custom for men to offer their daughters to the king.

Now it happened that the universal lord, Sa Kyah, who rules over all spirits and men looked earthward and saw the new kingdom that was established ; he became jealous and determined to kill Hsin Kyan and take his kingdom away from him. But Hsin Kyan was very subtle and cunning, so he tattooed himself with charms of such great strength that even the mighty lord Sa Kyah could not kill him. For many years they fought. Great mountains were thrown by each combatant at the other, but Hsin Kyan could not defeat the lord Sa Kyah, neither could the lord Sa Kyah kill Hsin Kyan.

Our great ancestor Hsin Kyan had seven daughters, whose names to this day are remembered among us as they have been given to the different days of the week, from Nang Ta Nang Nooie, the eldest, after whom we call the first day of the week Wan Ta Nang Nooie, to Nang Hsa Ne, the youngest, and when the mighty lord Sa Kyah found that he could not kill their father, he spoke to these daughters and told them he was searching for one whom he would make his chief queen, and that if one of them would kill his enemy, their father, and bring to him his head, he would choose that one to be his queen and make her joint ruler of the universe ; with him she should govern everything created.

But the charms tattooed upon Hsin Kyan were very potent. Water would not drown him ; fire would not burn him; rope would not strangle him; and he was invulnerable against thrust of spear and stroke of sword, and although all seven of his daughters tried to kill him yet they were not able to do so and six of them gave up the attempt in despair.

One day, however, the youngest, she whom we worship on the seventh day of the week and because she was the smallest call it Wan Hsa Nae, was walking in the jungle, and as she was passing under a tree she saw a bird sitting upon its topmost branch. Now this girl knew how clever birds are, and so she said to it :

"Brother Bird, oie ! can you tell me how I can kill my father ?"

Now although this daughter was the youngest, yet

she was more lovely than all her sisters, and the bird was so pleased with her that he said :

"Nang Hsa Nae, you are so beautiful that I will tell you the secret of your father's charm. Water cannot drown him, fire cannot burn him, neither can sword or spear wound him, but there is one way in which he may be killed. Take you, seven strands of a spider's web and twist them into a cord, then with a piece of white bamboo make a bow ; with this you will be able to cut off the head of your father and take it to the mighty lord Sa Kyah, and oh ! " continued the clever bird, " when you are his queen, do not forget the good turn I have done you, and the debt of gratitude you owe me therefor."

Nang Hsa Nae was full of joy when she learned the secret of her father's charm and she promised the little bird that when she became queen of the universe she would grant him any desire that he craved.

That night when everybody else was asleep, Nang Hsa Nae crept to her father's side and with the bow made of the seven twisted strands of a spider's web killed him and cut off his head.

With great joy she carried it to the universal lord. He was very glad to find that his enemy was at last dead, but although he had given his word to her, yet he would not marry Nang Hsa Nae, for, said he, she has killed her father although I could not conquer him. Were I to marry her, who will go surety for her that she will not do the same to me? So the wicked daughter did not gain her ambitious end after all.

Not only that, however, but she and her sisters received a punishment, one they are even now suffering, and will continue till the world ends. It is this:

When they found that the lord Sa Kyah would not marry their youngest sister or even accept their father's head, they said among themselves:

"What shall we do with the head of our father? Where shall we bury it? Should we place it in the earth the whole world would catch on fire; should we throw it into the sea, all the seven oceans would immediately boil; what shall we do?"

In their distress they went to the mighty lord Sa Kyah and in humble tones begged his lordship to give them advice so that they would be freed from the terrible trouble to which their wickedness had brought them. He looked at them and said:

"This is what you must do. You," pointing to the youngest, "must carry your father's head in your arms all this year, and when the year is finished you can give it to the sister who is next older than yourself. She will carry it for a year and thus one of you will ever after bear it."

And so it is. We know when the year ends because then come the Wan Kyap or washing days, when the princess who has carried her father's head for a year gives it to her elder sister and washes the bloodstains from her clothes.

From these spirits all the inhabitants of the world are descended, and so we see the saying of our philosophers is true, "We have all descended from spirits."

HOW THE KING OF PAGAN CAUGHT THE THIEF.

MANY, many years ago there lived near the old city of Pagan a famous robber chief who was so fierce and cruel that he made all men fear his name. He stole and killed and burned till the mothers used to frighten their disobedient children by saying, "Boh Lek Byah will get thee." He was a very brave and clever thief, and he became so strong that the headmen and elders of all the towns and villages throughout the country were obliged to fee him with money and goods, and if by any chance they did not pay this blackmail immediately it was demanded, that very night the followers of the robber chief would assuredly burn down their village and kill every man, woman, and child within it, for this was Shan and Burmese custom.

Boh Lek Byah entered every house in Pagan. None was too big, none too small. He stole from the *whon's* house as easily as from the hut of the poor man; it made no difference to him, till at last the palace where the great king lived was the only place whence he had not gotten booty. Several of his followers were caught and crucified, but that did not stop his bad actions or frighten him. In the old days, when a robber was caught he was taken to the jungle where the tigers are. All the tigers knew the place of execution as well as a

dog knows worship days when the women offer rice and curry at the pagodas. They used to tie the thieves fast to the cross by their feet, hands, and hair, and when they had jeered at them and the women and children had pelted them with stones and beaten them with bamboos, everybody went home and left them for the tigers to eat, and thus they did to the followers of Maung Lek Byah, but they could never catch the robber chief himself.

At last the people of Pagan city came to the Amat Löng, who was next in rank to the king himself, and said :

"Our lord, for long thy slaves have been in great and sore trouble, and unless our lord takes pity upon his servants we shall all arrive at destruction."

"What can I do?" cried the *amat*, in a loud, angry voice, "has he not stolen from me? Did I not pay him two whole *ticcals* of pure silver as protection money no later than the last Water Feast, and yet did he not rob me as I was coming home in my boat yesternight, and when I told him that I was the Amat Löng, did he not laugh in my face and yet rob me just the same. What can I do?"

"Our lord can go to the Ruler of the Golden Palace and plead for his slaves," suggested one of the suppliants.

Now, the Amat Löng was a very cunning man, and he knew that if the king heard that Boh Lek Byah had stolen so much from his subjects he would be very angry, and might perhaps even deprive him of his rank

as chief amat, for it was his duty to see that all robbers were caught and punished, therefore after thinking for a while, he said :

"My friends, listen to me; let us each give silver, as much as we can afford ; it is better to give part of our possessions than to have everything taken from us. Dost hear? This silver we will give to the *boh*, and he will then not trouble us any more, but will go to towns where the people are poorer and cannot afford to give as much as we, the citizens of this royal city of Pagan; then shall we have peace."

This advice was very good and would have been acted upon, but unfortunately, one of the little princes happened to be in the audience chamber that morning and heard what had been said. He went to his father, the ruler of the Golden Palace, and told the king what he had heard; therefore his majesty called the *amat* to the Golden Foot and asked him of these things.

"What is this I hear?" he demanded. "Has this wicked man robbed as much as the people say? Why hast thou not caught him as it was thy duty to do?"

"Son of the Sun," replied the servant, trembling very much as he kneeled before him, for who would not be afraid when the king is angry? "it is true; but this thief is a very wicked and clever thief, besides which he has a wonderful charm tattooed upon his body which is so potent that it makes him invulnerable to wounds from sword or gun, neither can he be bound with ropes, therefore it hath been impossible for the slave of our lord the king to capture or harm him."

"Then," said the king, still very angry, "get thee a charm still more potent than the one the robber chief hath, for if thou dost not bring him or his head to me ere three days have elapsed, thou shalt fall from thy rank of chief *amat*. Dost thou hear?"

The *amat* bowed till his head touched the floor before the Golden Foot and he crawled away from the presence the most unhappy man in all the king's possessions. Then in great haste he ran to his house and called all the charm-makers in the city to come to him without delay. Then when they had assembled before him he commanded them to make him a charm which would be stronger than the one tattooed upon the body of the robber chief, Boh Lek Byah. But the charm-sellers one and all declared that this was an impossibility, for the thief had upon the luckiest day of the whole year eaten a piece of flesh cut from the body of a murdered man, and so he could not be harmed in any way, neither was it in their power to give his lordship the amat a charm stronger than his.

Very frightened was the amat when he heard this, and very frightened were the soldiers who had been ordered to go with him and catch the thief. Their wives also cried all that night, for they knew what a terrible man the robber was, and how angry he would be with the men who had dared come to capture him. He would show no mercy, and without doubt would kill them all, and in derision send their heads back to the city afterward. This the robber had done before more than once to parties of soldiers sent to take him.

Now it happened that among the soldiers who followed the Amat Löng was one who had a very wise and clever wife, and when she saw her husband march away and knew the great danger that he and his fellows were in, she went to the wife of another soldier, and this is what she said :

"Sister, oie, listen to my words. If we do naught but sit in our houses and weep our husbands will all assuredly arrive at destruction, for the *boh* is a very cruel and cunning man. Of what use will our houses be to us if we have no husbands? Listen, therefore, to what I say. The man who collects the blackmail for the *boh* from the headman of a village across the river and delivers it into his hand is well known to me. His name is Maung Gyei, and he sells books in the bazaar. He is a very wise man, and knows all the followers of the Boh Lek Byah. Let our husbands fight the *boh* with silver. It is sharper than a sword, and injures not the man who handles it skillfully. We will collect all the money we can. I will sell my earrings, thou canst sell thy bracelets, and the wives of all the other soldiers can do likewise. This will bring a big bag of silver, and half of it we will give to Maung Gyei. He will then call some of the followers of the *boh* to a secret place and tell him that the Amat Löng will give him the balance in return for the head of their master, if they take it to his lordship ere three days have have elapsed. Our husbands will then bring the head of this wicked man to the royal palace and lay it before the Golden Foot ; they will reap much honor and

glory for having fulfilled the order of the king and the country will be freed from this great trouble.

Now, when the wives of the other soldiers heard these words they perceived that she was indeed a very clever woman, fit to be the wife of a great *amat* instead of a common soldier, and one ran swiftly after the *amat* and his men, for in truth they had not gone far, but were traveling slowly, because they feared to come up with the *boh* and his fierce followers ; and they were filled with joy at the good news the messenger brought them. At the order of the *amat* his men hid themselves in a thick jungle till the money should be collected and brought to them.

After two days and when it was very dark, a man came to them saying that he was the friend of Maung Gyei, and bore with him the head of the robber chief, and thereupon showed it wrapped up in a cloth. Then were the soldiers full of joy again, and they paid the money to him, and that night they slept peacefully, for they knew that their enemy could harm them no more, and that they had been delivered from the great danger which had been threatening them. Before they slept the *amat* sent a swift messenger to the city to tell the king the good news that the robber chief was dead, and that they were bearing his head with them and would present it before the Golden Foot the next morning.

Next day, therefore, at the head of his men, he marched to the Golden Palace, and the people of the city were so full of joy over the fact that Boh Lek

Byah was dead, that great numbers followed the procession to the palace gates in the hopes of getting a glimpse at the head of their enemy, and everybody praised the Amat Lŏng for his bravery and wisdom in killing the robber chief who had oppressed them so sorely. His wife also called musicians and dancers, and gave orders to her servants to prepare a great feast that night in honor of her brave husband. They reached the Golden Foot and knelt before the throne, but when the basket was opened, behold, it contained the head of another man, and not that of the *boh* at all.

Then did all the people in the city laugh at the *amat* because his enemy had deceived him, and he fell from his rank of chief *amat*. All his golden umbrellas were taken away from him and given to his successor, and he was obliged to earn his living by selling medicines in bazaar, and from that day till he died he bore the nickname of Amat Toak Arah ;[1] but the people all praised the cleverness of his enemy, the thief.

Now, when the king saw how cunning Boh Lek Byah was and how easily he had deceived his servant, he determined that he himself would take the robber chief and thus gain great credit and renown. To this end he gave orders to the headman of every village throughout his kingdom that directly the robber should come within his jurisdiction he was to report immediately, and the king would send a trusty officer to arrest him. He did not tell them that he himself would go,

[1] Literally, "The counselor who fell from his rank," *i. e.*, was degraded.

therefore for a long time the headmen feared to obey the order of the king for, said they among themselves: "The *boh* deceived the Amat Löng, who was one of the most cunning of men, and will he not escape from any other whom it should please our lord the king to send against him? Is there any more cunning man in the palace now than before? When he finds out also that we have reported his presence to the king his mind will become hot against us, and he will without doubt return and destroy all our houses and kill everybody in our village. Nay, it is better to give him silver and beg him begone elsewhere," so although they told the messengers of the king they would follow his words, they simply held their peace when the dreaded robber chief was near their village.

But after a long time the headman of Myo Haung, who was braver than his fellows, came to the palace and told the king that the *boh* was then at his village, and would leave when it became dark, taking boat for Myo Kywe, which was a suburb of the city of Pagan.

The heart of the king was filled with joy when he heard this piece of good news, and he gave the headman a great reward. Also he took off the royal robes such as is the custom of kings to wear, and put on very poor ones so that no one would think that he was the lord who ate the country of Pagan. He also took with him a sword; not the royal sword with the silver sheath and ivory handle, but an old dah with a wooden handle bound around with rattan string, and a sheath of wood, such as the common people carry, then he went to the

bank of the river near Myo Kywe and waited. He waited long, but his heart was strong and he did not become discouraged by reason of the waiting, and at last he saw coming down the river a small boat, and in it a man whom he knew immediately to be the thief.

Maung Lek Byah guided his boat toward the bank near where the king was seated, for he was a skillful oarsman, and when he had fastened it with a rattan loop to the end of his oar stuck into the soft mud at the water's edge he ascended the path to the village, and as he reached the top of the bank he caught sight of the king in his dingy clothes and wearing the old sword with the wooden handle, sitting on the side of the path.

He was surprised to see a man there at that time of night, for the gongs which call the priests and old women to worship had sounded long before, and everybody in the village was sound asleep, therefore he gazed earnestly at the king and then called out:

"Who is that?"

"It is a man who wishes to arrive at the rank of disciple to our lord," replied the king.

"Art thou a man of the day or a man of the night?" asked the robber looking down at him.

"Thy servant is a man of the night," replied the king.

"Hast thou not heard how many of my followers have been caught and executed? How that the tigers at the entering in of the villages will not now eat oxen but wait till one of my men is tied up for them? I

tell thee they have not long to wait either. Art thou not afraid?"

"Ah, our lord," replied the king, "thy disciples suffered because they did not take heed and follow in the footsteps of our lord, therefore have they arrived at destruction; but thy servant will study thee, O payah, and thus will I learn how to become a great *boh* and also to escape their fate."

Now when the king talked in this fashion the *boh* was very pleased with him, and gave him permission to follow. He also promised to teach his new disciple all his arts; that he would not let him ever be caught and would make him as famous a *boh* even as he was. "And so," said he, "as thou hast a sword with thee, follow me. I will give thee thy first lesson."

Now it happened that as they walked along toward the city the thief began to think within himself, "Who can this new disciple be? He surely comes from a high family, for he speaks not like the common people, but as kings have a custom of speaking. He wears the clothes of a common man, and carries the sword of a coolie, but yet his words are the words of one used to command. Can he be a spy sent by the *amat* whom I tricked so nicely the other day, I wonder?" and thus he turned it over and over in his mind.

The *hpeas* have ever aided the kings of Burma, and now those whom the king had been in the habit of feeding daily were watching over him, and when they heard the *boh* thus talk with himself, for the spirits can hear us think even when we make no sounds of

words, they put it into the head of the robber to go to the house of the king's own astrologer. It was not very far and they soon arrived there. Then Maung Lek Byah said to the king :

"Stay thou here and watch ; if thou dost see or hear aught come and call me," but he himself went under the house of the astrologer to discover whether he slept or not. When he knew that the man was sound asleep he would draw a sharp knife which he carried in his girdle, cut a hole in the mat side of the house, creep in through this hole and take what he wished ; then he would escape before the lord of the house awoke.

As he was watching, however, he heard the astrologer come out upon the veranda so that he could study the stars, for that was his custom ; then he heard him say to himself :

"Truly this is a good thing to marvel at, for I see the star of that famous robber chief, Boh Lek Byah, and following it closely is the star of none other than the ruler of the Golden Palace himself."

For a long time the astrologer sat upon his veranda pondering over this strange occurrence and trying to think what it should portend; but in vain. He could think of no solution of the mystery, so after again saying that it was a good thing to marvel at he gave it up and went into his house to sleep.

Thus did the thief discover the high rank of his new disciple, for the astrologer knew the star of the *boh* well and would make no mistake. He also knew the star of the king. Had this same astrologer not cast the

horoscope of the robber chief and foretold which days were lucky and which unlucky to him, so that by taking heed he had never been caught? Therefore when he again came forth from under the royal astrologer's house and saw the king was still waiting without, even as he had given orders, his mind was filled with great fear.

Then said the king directly he saw the robber: "O Kin Byah, thy servant knows a place where there are so many rubies that they are as common as *maknin* seeds that the children play with in the dust; gold is as plentiful as iron is with us, and there is enough silk to stock ten bazaars. All this is within reach of our hands. I can guide thee to the place, for I know it well; wilt thou follow?"

Then said the thief: "I know of but one place of which thou canst say that with truth, and that is the Golden Palace; but a man may not enter there and live. Knowest thou not that the guards carry sharp *dahs*, and that if a man is caught there without permission from the king or one of his *amats*, he is immediately impaled? In very truth it is a place good to shun and fear greatly, even as the den of a hungry tiger in the jungle."

"True, O brave man," replied the king, "but this evening as I passed by the palace I saw hanging from the top of the wall a rope-ladder; we can climb over, take enough to make us rich for the rest of our lives, and run away before the guards with the sharp *dahs* discover that we have been there. Thus shall we earn much wealth and glory, and people throughout the

land will call our lord the 'Boh Who Entered the Golden Palace,' and all men will fear his name more than the name of a hungry leopard."

Then were the thoughts of the *boh* in great confusion, and he said to himself: "Of a truth I am about to arrive at destruction at last. I have had my last adventure. If I do not follow the king he will assuredly call out to the guard and I shall be taken. If I go, how shall I be delivered from the great dangers which will surround me in the Golden Palace? I am undone whichever way I take."

Then said he to the king: "O disciple, whom I love much, I fear to enter the Golden Palace, for this I perceive is one of my unlucky days. We will therefore go to Pin Tha village, for I saw this morning a great number of coolies there. They were following a great prince from the hills. They have been traveling far today and are therefore heavy with sleep, and we can despoil them of as much as we can carry away. As they are very weary with their journey, none will know aught till they awake in the morning."

"Upon what day wast thou born?" demanded the king, and the *boh* said that it was upon a Saturday.

"Then," said the king, "behold! this is a lucky day," and he drew forth from under his jacket a horoscope, which showed that this was a lucky day upon which a man who had been born upon a Saturday could undertake any deed requiring great wisdom and bravery in its accomplishment, and in spite of all that Maung Lek Byah could say the king led the way

toward the palace, and the *boh* was obliged to follow him, which he did with very slow and hesitating steps, for his heart had become as weak as water.

Even as the king had said, there was a rope-ladder hanging over the palace wall, and the *boh* perceived in what manner the king had left the Golden Palace, but being a very wise man he followed without opening his mouth.

They passed through the palace courtyard and saw there a thing good to marvel at; all the guards who ought to have been watching their lord were slumbering, so that the king and the *boh* gathered up all the spears and *dahs* belonging to these men and carried them away, hiding them in a secret place under one of the houses.

As they entered the palace buildings the thief became so full of alarm that all his strength left him and he could hardly walk. Then the king saw that his follower had arrived at great fear, and as they passed the house where the royal food was prepared, he said:

"Friend, I perceive that thou art in sore distress; come, eat the food I am about to prepare for thee and thou wilt become strong."

"Nay," said the *boh*, "that I cannot do. Can a common man eat of the golden food and live? This will I not do; surely I should be accounted worthy of death." The king would not listen to him, but entered the royal kitchen, and with his own hands cooked some food which he compelled the thief to eat.

Now, the king had prepared two messes, one in

which he had cunningly placed some opium and one without, and it was the food which contained the opium that the king gave to the *boh*. Therefore, after a little time, he said to the king :

" O disciple of mine, I know not what is the matter with me. I have no strength and although it is death to sleep in the Golden Palace yet must I sleep, for if I do not I shall surely die."

As he said these words his head drooped upon his chest, his eyes closed and he fell asleep. Once more was the heart of the king filled with joy and he bound the *boh* with strong ropes in great haste and made him a prisoner.

Early the next morning the king called the officer who was in charge of the guard the night before and when he was come before the face of his majesty, the king said :

" I have a parable to tell thee. Once upon a time there was a great king and in his country was also a famous robber chief and, behold, one night the king was sore troubled with questions of statecraft so that he could not sleep, therefore he walked throughout his palace. As he was passing through the courtyard he spied a ladder hanging from the top of the wall. Now the thief of whom I have spoken had that very night entered the Golden Palace and at that same moment the king caught sight of him, loaded down with plunder, creeping toward the rope ladder beside which he stood. Then the king fell upon him and took him prisoner, bound him securely with strong ropes and

dragged him to a safe place ; but the soldiers who should have been watching were all asleep. What should be done to such guards as these ? ''

Now the officer did not yet know that the *dahs* of his men had been stolen, so bowing before the Golden Foot, he replied :

'' Head of thy servant's body, there is but one thing to be done, they are worthy of death. Their lord should pass judgment upon them without mercy and that immediately.''

'' That is a good judgment,'' replied the king, and turning again to the officer of the guard, he said :

'' Last night I saw the great and renowned robber chief, Boh Lek Byah, in this palace. I took him prisoner with mine own hands, behold, he lies tied fast with ropes in yonder room, but all the guards who should have been watching were asleep. Where are their *dahs?* Let every man who has no sword be impaled before I eat my morning rice.''

Then were the hearts of the king's *amats* full of joy when they heard that the thief whom they all feared was a prisoner in the palace, and they praised the wondrous bravery and subtlety of their royal master, saying that without doubt he was the bravest and wisest king who ever sat under a white umbrella.

The king was very proud as he listened to their praises and gave orders that the robber chief should be brought before him.

When Boh Lek Byah was led to the Golden Foot he prostrated himself, and the king said :

"If a man be found in the royal palace at night what hath custom decreed should be the punishment for his presumption?"

Then the prisoner said: "King above all kings, it is death."

"Hast thou anything to say why thou shouldst not be impaled or given to the tigers to eat?" demanded the king in a terrible voice.

"Lord of the world," replied the unfortunate man, "last night thou didst ask to become disciple to our lord's slave. Will the disciple order his teacher to be executed? When our lord's slave was beneath the royal astrologer's house he discovered that his new disciple was the Eater of the Country and so when our lord of the Golden Palace ordered his slave to enter, he would have been worthy of death had he not obeyed. Will the Son of the Sun execute his slave for following his words?"

Then when the king heard that the robber had known who he really was, he marveled much at his wisdom, and said:

"Assuredly thou art too wise a man for the tigers to eat. Take thou yonder sword, it belonged to him who yesterday was captain of the royal guard. Follow me and thou shalt later become my chief *amat*."

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

PUC. Curry.

ZAYAT. A place built for the accommodation of travelers, also used as an assembly place for worship, especially during religious feasts; they are usually built near monasteries.

PARAH. (Burmese, *payah*) a god; an image of Gautama Buddha.

KAM. Luck.

MAU. To be skillful.

AMAT LÖNG. The chief amat or chief counselor of a prince.

SOIE. The Indian "*viss*"; a weight equal to about three and a half pounds avoirdupois.

CHATTIE. A cooking pot, usually made of earthenware.

HÜK. A deep rent in the earth with steep sides; a ravine; a torrent usually runs in it during the rainy season, but it is dry in the hot season.

HPEA. Spirit or supernatural being.

AMAT. A minister of State.

HSAN. A rice bag.

NANG ME PRAH. A queen.

44 B26
RIGGS
ED MIRICK

8871

Please: These cards MUST be returned with this book to clear your record. Penalty 10 cents per card

1

BROOKLYN PUBLIC LIBRARY
CENTRAL SERVICE
GRAND ARMY PLAZA

Give your NEIGHBOR a chance to use this book. Return it on or before DUE DATE SHOWN ABOVE. Overdue fees: 5¢ for each ADULT book per calendar day. 2¢ for each CHILD'S book per calendar day.